

Toward a History of Theoderic's Building Program

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Theoderic, the Ostrogothic king who ruled in Italy (493–526), is generally known as one of the great builders of late antiquity. His surviving works have been studied in some detail, but his role as patron has received only limited attention. Apart from the immediate functional requirements of the individual utilitarian, civic, ecclesiastical, and ceremonial structures built by Theoderic, the question of which political and cultural considerations confronted him as patron and how they influenced his choices has not been fully examined. This study will attempt to address this question, first by determining the important concepts that guided his patronage and then by examining the works themselves to determine how these ideas were expressed in architecture and its decoration. Although some of Theoderic's works throughout Italy will be discussed briefly in order to obtain an idea of the breadth of his patronage, this study will examine especially his building program at Ravenna which, as his capital, was the focus of his activity.

I

The greatest influence on the development of Theoderic's political and cultural ideals was his experience in the Great Palace of Constantinople where he lived from about 461 to 471 as a hostage of Emperor Leo I.¹ Here, among the princes of

Byzantium, he grew to be a wise and valorous man, "not inexpert in letters," having been taught by "the best among teachers."² By 484 he had become king of the Goths and had "received the rods of the consuls in the presence of the emperor himself."³ Following Theoderic's assistance in regaining his throne, Emperor Zeno adopted him as his son-at-arms and gave him a triumph in Constantinople.⁴ He was also made a patrician, held the office of *magister militum praesentalis*, and was given the imperial *nomen gentilicium* of Flavius.⁵

In agreement with Zeno, Theoderic led the Ostrogoths in an invasion of Italy where, after a war lasting several years, he finally defeated the Herulian king Odoacer in 493. He installed himself at

Roma di fronte a Bisanzio e ai Longobardi, Storia di Roma 9 (Bologna, 1941), 35–94; P. Lamma, *Teoderico* (Brescia, 1950); H. Wolfram, *Geschichte der Goten: Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts. Entwurf einer historischen Ethnographie* (Munich, 1979), 353–409; R. Berti, *Storia dei Goti*, Saggi e documenti 17 (Venice, 1982), 135–77, which unfortunately lacks a scholarly apparatus; T. S. Burns, *A History of the Ostrogoths* (Bloomington, Ind., 1984), 67–107. Ensslin, 14–33, gives an overview of Constantinople during Theoderic's stay.

²Theophanes, *Chronographia*, a. 5977, ed. C. de Boor, II (Leipzig, 1885), 115. Ennodius, *Panegyricus dictus clementissimo Regi Theoderico*, c. 11, ed. F. Vogel, MGH, AA, VII (Berlin, 1885), 204: "Educavit te in gremio civilitatis Graecia praesaga venturi." The idea that Theoderic was illiterate and could only sign his name by tracing a stencil (*Excerpta Valesiana*, 79, ed. and trans. J. Rolfe, app. to *Ammianus Marcellinus*, Loeb, III [Cambridge, Mass., 1939], 556–59) was probably a misunderstanding of the use of the royal seal. See P. Riché, *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West, Sixth through Eighth Centuries*, trans. J. Contreni (Columbia, S.C., 1976), 57; W. Ensslin, "Rex Theodericus inlitteratus," *HJ* 60 (1940), 391–96; M. A. Wes, *Das Ende des Kaisertums im Westen des römischen Reichs*, *Archaeologische Studien van het Nederlands Historisch Instituut te Rome* 2 (The Hague, 1967), 49–50.

³Malalas, *Chronographia*, XV.3, PG 97, cols. 383–84.

⁴Jordanes, *De origine actibus getarum*, c. 289, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, AA, V.1 (Berlin, 1882), 132; trans. C. Mierow, *The Gothic History of Jordanes*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, 1915), 134–35.

⁵Ensslin, 41, 154; Wolfram, *Geschichte*, 356; A. Mócsy, "Der Name Flavius als Rangbezeichnung in der Spätantike," *Akte des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für griechische und lateinische Epigraphik* (Wien . . . 1962) (Vienna, 1964), 257–63.

This paper is an extensive revision of my M.A. thesis, *The Patronage of Theoderic at Ravenna* (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 1983). A portion was read at the Eighth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Chicago, 1982; see "The Palace of Theoderic at Ravenna: A Reevaluation," *Abstracts of Papers*, 8–9. Some of the ideas expressed below were included in "Architectural and Historical Continuity in the Mausoleum of Theoderic," *17th International Byzantine Congress, 1986: Abstracts of Short Papers* (Washington, D.C., 1986), 156. For their always helpful comments and criticisms I wish to thank Peter Brown, Henry Maguire, and especially Slobodan Ćurčić.

¹The standard work is W. Ensslin, *Theoderich der Grosse*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1959) (hereafter Ensslin). See also O. Bertolini,

Ravenna and ruled Italy for the next thirty-three years. Theoderic's reign was viewed favorably by contemporaries, even by Byzantine writers. Procopius wrote that Theoderic "was exceedingly careful to observe justice, he preserved the laws on a sure basis, he protected the land and kept it safe from the barbarians dwelling round about, and attained the highest possible degree of wisdom and manliness. And he himself committed scarcely a single act of injustice against his subjects, nor would he brook such conduct on the part of anyone else who attempted it."⁶

Theoderic's was a time of peace and prosperity as perceived by his contemporaries and by later writers.⁷ His panegyricist, Ennodius, refers to this period as a "golden age"⁸ and claims that under his reign peace had become so established that it was only in the games of the gladiators that the people could get an idea of what war was like.⁹ Although such comments are to be expected in a panegyric, they are echoed in later historical writings such as the thirteenth-century *Chronicle* of Siccardus who noted that under Theoderic "happiness was at its maximum, peace and abundance were great."¹⁰ Furthermore, in an era of strong religious disputes, Theoderic, an Arian, insisted on peaceful relations between religious factions and, until the last years of his life, refused to permit acts of persecution to go unpunished, even to the extent of ordering the rebuilding of a synagogue destroyed by Christian zealots in Genoa.¹¹

Understanding Theoderic and his patronage requires recognition of one of the fundamental concepts underlying his rule: his own perception of his political and historical position. Although he was never an emperor in name and generally referred to himself with the title of *rex*, Theoderic saw himself as the direct successor of the emperors who had ruled Rome, and in many ways acted as if he actually were one of them. It is significant that

when the king celebrated his *tricennalia* in 500, the festivities were held not in his capital of Ravenna but in the ancient capital of Rome, where a great ceremony took place outside the Curia.¹² Fulgentius, who witnessed the event, was struck by the magnificence of the spectacle of the king, the Senate, and various classes of society, all decked out in pompous finery worthy of an imperial ceremony. Turning to his companions he exclaimed: "How splendid can the Heavenly Jerusalem be if the earthly Rome thus shines!"¹³ Also like one of the emperors of old, he celebrated the event with games in the Circus Maximus and the Flavian Amphitheater and was acclaimed by the Roman people to be a "new Trajan."¹⁴ Eutropius, who wrote in the late fourth century, provides a clue to the significance of such an acclamation: so much respect was paid to Trajan's memory that even in his time emperors were acclaimed "more fortunate than Augustus, better than Trajan."¹⁵ Theoderic was not only the recipient of a flattering acclamation but one that appears to have been commonly used for emperors.

Although his official constitutional position was that of king or some high imperial office,¹⁶ inscriptions and writings often refer to him with titles used exclusively for an emperor. Most notable is an inscription commemorating work on the Appian Way near Terracina: "Our Lord, the very glorious and celebrator of triumphs, always Augustus, for the good of the state, guardian of liberty, propagator of the Roman people, subjugator of peoples."¹⁷ Although the title of Augustus with reference to Theoderic appears only in this inscription, the key word *imperium* is found in several writings referring to him.¹⁸

There is clear evidence that Theoderic saw his

⁶Procopius, *De bello gothico*, II.1.27–28, ed. and trans. H. B. Dewing, *History of the Wars*, V.1.27–28, Loeb, III (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 10–13.

⁷See Ensslin, 237–82.

⁸Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, c. 93, ed. Vogel, 322.

⁹Ibid., c. 85, ed. Vogel, 213.

¹⁰RISS, VII (Milan, 1725), 565.

¹¹On his tolerance toward Orthodox believers see *Excerpta Valesiana*, 60, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 544, 545; on that toward Jews, Cassiodorus, *Variae*, II.27, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, AA, XII (Berlin, 1894), 61–62 and ed. A. J. Fridh, CCSL (Turnhout, 1972), 77–78, containing his order for rebuilding the synagogue and his famous statement, "We cannot order a religion, because no one is forced to believe against his will"; trans. T. Hodgkin, *The Letters of Cassiodorus* (London, 1886), 183.

¹²*Excerpta Valesiana*, 67, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 550, 551; Cassiodorus, *Chronica*, a. 500, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, AA, XI (Berlin, 1894), 160. See also Ensslin, 104, 350 note 13. Constantine I, who resided only briefly in Rome, returned there to celebrate his *decennalia* (315) and *vicennalia* (326).

¹³Ferrandus, *S. Fulgentii Episcopi Ruspensi vita*, c. 27, PL 65, col. 131.

¹⁴*Excerpta Valesiana*, 60, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 544, 545.

¹⁵Eutropius, *Breviarum ab urbe condita*, VIII.5.3, ed. F. Rühl, Teubner (1897), 56. For the fame of Trajan in the 4th century see R. Syme, *Emperors and Biography: Studies in the Historia Augusta* (Oxford, 1971), 89–112.

¹⁶See A. H. M. Jones, "The Constitutional Position of Odoacer and Theoderic," *JRS* 52 (1962), 126–30.

¹⁷*CIL*, X, 6850. See also T. Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders 476–535*, III.4. *The Ostrogothic Invasion*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1896), 314.

¹⁸Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I.3, I.6, I.11; VIII.18; Ennodius, *Libellus pro synodo*, c. 73, ed. F. Vogel, MGH, AA, VII, 59.

position as being above that of other kings, somewhat nearing equality with the Byzantine emperor. To Herminafred, king of the Thuringians, he wrote: "Desiring to unite you to ourselves by the bonds of kindred, we bestow upon you our niece Amalbirga so that you, who descend from a royal stock, may now far more conspicuously shine by the splendor of Amali blood."¹⁹

Soon after having gained control of Italy he demanded and received the imperial "ornaments of the palace" which Odoacer had sent to Constantinople.²⁰ The exact nature of these ornaments is uncertain, but they were probably insignia that marked the importance of the dwelling. Having obtained the *ornamenta*, Theoderic won recognition of his rule from Anastasius and once again raised himself above the stature of the other barbarian kings in the West.

Like an emperor, he dressed in the imperial purple, referred to as the "sacred clothes."²¹ It is possible that he wore the diadem, but this is uncertain.²² Just as his clothing was sacred in the imperial tradition, so were his other attributes: "sacred person," "sacred precept," "sacred friendship."²³ One of the offices of the government was the "Count of the Sacred Largesse."²⁴ Although there is no document from the time of Theoderic referring to his palace as *sacrum palatium*, it is called the *divina domus*, and Cassiodorus is recorded as having served in the office of "Quaestor of the Sacred Palace."²⁵

¹⁹Cassiodorus, *Variae*, IV.1, ed. Mommsen, 114; ed. Fridh, 114; trans. Hodgkin, 235. Amali was the family name of Theoderic; however, several manuscripts give "imperialis" in place of "Amali," which would be an even stronger statement.

²⁰*Excerpta Valesiana*, 64, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 548, 549. See also Ensslin, 77–78.

²¹Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I.2, ed. Mommsen, 11; ed. Fridh, 10. See also *ibid.*, VI.7; Jordanes, *Getica*, c. 295; Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, c. 87; Ensslin, 156–59; and S. McCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1981), 233–34.

²²Ensslin, 156, citing *Variae*, I.42.4, and E. Stein, *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, II (Paris, 1949), 116, argue that Theoderic wore the diadem. McCormack, *Art*, 233–34, says that he did not. It is certain that his successors did, as they are so shown on coins. See, e.g., W. Wroth, *Western and Provincial Byzantine Coins of the Vandals, Ostrogoths and Lombards and of the Empires of Thessalonica, Nicaea and Trebizond in the British Museum* (London, 1911; rpr. Chicago, 1966), xxxiii–xxxiv, 75–76, pl. ix.

²³See Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, c. 23, ed. Vogel, 206; Cassiodorus, *Variae*, III.15, ed. Mommsen, 87; ed. Fridh, 108; IV.29, ed. Mommsen, 127; ed. Fridh, 161; I.42, ed. Mommsen, 37; ed. Fridh, 46.

²⁴Cassiodorus, *Variae*, VI.7, ed. Mommsen, 180–81; ed. Fridh, 233–34.

²⁵Cassiodorus, *Variae*, V.9, ed. Mommsen, 149; ed. Fridh, 190; VII.43, ed. Mommsen, 224; ed. Fridh, 292. Cassiodorus is identified as having been the "quaestor sacri palatii," on the title page of his *Chronica*, ed. Mommsen, 120. The earliest direct

Theoderic did respect the emperor's prerogatives in some areas such as coinage in which his issues usually depict the emperor's image on the obverse with some showing his own monogram on the reverse.²⁶ Only one coin or medallion bearing Theoderic's effigy has been found. It shows a frontal bust portrait of the king who raises his right hand in a gesture of *adlocutio* while his left supports a Victoriola, all under the inscription "REX THEODERICVS PIVS PRIN(CEPS) I(NVICTIMUS) S(EMPER)" (Fig. 1). This seems, however, to have been a special issue struck perhaps to commemorate his visit to Rome.²⁷ Theoderic also respected the emperor's privilege in issuing *edicta* rather than *leges*, but all in all his attitude toward the emperor is one of studied independence. His position may be summed up as one of a "prince" as on the medallion or, more to the point, as a "Roman prince," a designation that he applied to himself.²⁸ Contemporary writers took this one step further. Ennodius claimed that Theoderic acted like an emperor,²⁹ while Proco-

reference to the "sacred palace" at Ravenna is found in a document of 557: G. Marini, *I papiri diplomatici* (Rome, 1805), 206–7, no. CXL; see also 185, no. CXX. In general, see Ensslin, 158–59.

²⁶See Wroth, *Coins*, xxxi–xxxiii, 46–59, pls. v–viii; F. Kraus, *Die Münzen Odoacars und des Ostgotenreiches in Italien* (Halle, 1928), 65–104, pls. II–V; J. P. C. Kent, "The Coinage of Theoderic in the Names of Anastasius and Justin I," in *Mints, Dies and Currency: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of Albert Baldwin*, ed. R. Carson (London, 1971), 67–74; W. Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini, I. Von Anastasius I. bis Justinianus I. (491–565), einschliesslich der ostgotischen und vandalischen Prägungen*, Denkwien, Philos.-hist.Kl. 109 (Vienna, 1973), 77–91, pls. 36–41; E. Arslan, *Le monete di Ostrogoti, Longobardi e Vandali: Catalogo delle Civiche Raccolte Numismatiche di Milano* (Milan, 1978), 35–42.

²⁷On the medallion see Wroth, *Coins*, xxxi–xxxiii, 54; Kraus, *Die Münzen*, 82; and E. Bernareggi, "Il medaglione d'oro di Teoderico," *RIN* 71 (1969), 89–106, who dates it to the end of Theoderic's life, believing such a coin to be a provocation to the Byzantine emperor (Justin I). M. R. Alföldi, "Il medaglione d'oro di Teoderico," *RIN* 80 (1978), 133–42, convincingly returns to the traditional date of 500, connected with the king's visit to Rome. For the iconography of the Victoriola held by a ruler, see *idem*, "Signum Deae: Die kaiserzeitlichen Vorgängen des Reichsapfels," *JNG* 11 (1961), 19–32.

²⁸Cassiodorus, *Variae*, III.16, ed. Mommsen, 88; ed. Fridh, 109; trans. Hodgkin, 205. For Theoderic as a "prince," see Ensslin, 155–58; Wes, *Das Ende des Kaisertums*, 160–65; E. Bach, "Théodoric, romain ou barbare?" *Byz* 25–27 (1955–57), 413–20; H. Wolfram, "Gotisches Königtum und römisches Kaisertum von Theodosius dem Grossen bis Justinian I.," *FS* 13 (1979), 1–28, esp. 17–23.

²⁹"Ego tibi, quod admirationem vincat, oppono principem meum ita ortum, ut eum non liceat improbari, ita agere, quasi inter imperatores adhuc precetur adiungi"; Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, c. 18, ed. Vogel, 205. See also M. Demoulin, "Le gouvernement de Théodoric et la domination des Ostrogoths en Italie d'après les oeuvres d'Ennodius," *RH* 78 (1902), 1–7, 241–65, esp. 246–51.

pius noted that Theoderic “invested himself with all the qualities which appropriately belong to one who is by birth an emperor . . .” and “. . . in fact he was as truly an emperor as any who have distinguished themselves in this office from the beginning.”³⁰

II

Theoderic's view of himself as a ruler was made plain by his active patronage of the arts, aided by the peace and prosperity of the time. Activity in the arts increased substantially in what may have been a renaissance of sorts. Literature flourished under his patronage with such writer-scholars as Cassiodorus, Arator, Jordanes, Boethius, Ennodius, and Rusticus Helpidius. Many of their writings are full of references to classical works and the age in which it was produced. It has even been argued that there was such a phenomenon as an “Ostrogothic Renaissance,” at least as far as literature is concerned.³¹ A revealing insight into Theoderic's interest in the past is found in a letter from his successor Athalaric to Cassiodorus: “For when he (Theoderic) had laid aside the cares of state, he would seek in your conversation the opinions of wise men of old, that by his own deeds he might make himself equal to the ancients. Into the courses of the stars, into the gulfs of the sea, into the marvels of springing fountains, this most acute questioner enquired, so that by these diligent investigations into the nature of things he seemed to be a philosopher wearing the purple.”³² This “philosopher-king” is patterned on the formula given by Plato,³³ and the reader is presented with a most favorable impression of a learned, well-cultured ruler, a far cry from the generally held view of him as a typical uncouth, barbarian warrior-king.

His interest in making himself equal to the an-

cients and reviving the glory of Rome is also reflected in some of the coins issued during his reign. Especially noteworthy are those that depict on the obverse a helmeted Roma and on the reverse the Lupa Romana suckling the twins and bearing the inscription “INVICTA ROMA,” a type that certainly harks back to times long past. In fact, the closest parallel is to be found in a series of bronze medallions issued under Constantine some two centuries earlier.³⁴ His interest in antiquity is also apparent in his patronage of architecture. The *cura palatii* was ordered to study Euclidian geometry and to “see that the new work harmonizes well with the old.”³⁵ The same directive is made to the *architectus publicorum* of Rome who was also told to “read the books of the ancients” and, better yet, to study the extant monuments of ancient Rome for inspiration.³⁶ These comments reveal that renaissance-like ideals were on the mind of the patron.

However, if this was not a period of true “renaissance,” it was definitely one of *renovatio*.³⁷ Theoderic desired to “bring back all things to their former state (in the Republic).”³⁸ This desire was strongly expressed in the king's active patronage of building projects. “Most worthy of royal attention,” he wrote, “is the rebuilding of ancient cities,”³⁹ a concept that went hand in hand with his desire to “preserve the monuments of Antiquity.”⁴⁰ There are several literary testimonies of Theoderic's building activities. The *Excerpta Valesiana* notes that “he was . . . a lover of building and a restorer of

³⁰Procopius, *De bello gothico*, I.1.26, 29; ed. and trans. Dewing, III, 10–13. See also M. Reydellet, *La royauté dans la littérature latine de Sidoine Apollinaire à Isidore de Séville*, BEFAR 243 (Rome, 1981), 181–238, esp. 210.

³¹P. Courcelle, *Les lettres grecques en Occident de Macrobie à Cassiodore*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1948), 257–388; E. Anagnin, *Il concetto di rinascita attraverso il medio evo (V–X sec.)* (Milan, 1958), 163–83. Against the idea is Riché, *Education and Culture*, 57. For Theoderic's patronage of the arts see Ensslin, 263–82; F. W. Deichmann, “La corte dei re goti a Ravenna,” *CorisRav* 27 (1980), 41–53, rpr. as “Der Hof der gotischen Könige zu Ravenna” in his *Rom, Ravenna, Konstantinopel, Naher Osten: Gesammelte Studien zur spätantiken Architektur, Kunst und Geschichte* (Wiesbaden, 1982), 469–78.

³²*Variae*, IX.24, ed. Mommsen, 290; ed. Fridh, 377; trans. Hodgkin, 410–11.

³³Courcelle, *Lettres*, 258 note 9. See Plato, *De republica*, V.473c, also quoted by Boethius, *De consolazione philosophiae*, I.pr.4.

³⁴See Wroth, *Coins*, 98 f, 104 f and pl. xiv, nos. 1–7; Hahn, *Moneta*, 89, nos. 70–71; and C. Dulière, *Lupa romana: Recherches d'iconographie et essai d'interprétation*, EPAHA 18 (Brussels, 1979), I, 185–91, and II, figs. 156–58, where the coins of Theoderic are illustrated with the Constantinian medallions. For the latter see also J. P. C. Kent, *Roman Coins* (New York, 1978), 331 and pl. 164, no. 651.

³⁵Cassiodorus, *Variae*, VII.5, ed. Mommsen, 204; ed. Fridh, 264. For a new translation and commentary see G. Houghton, “Theoderic and the *Cura Palatii*,” *Apocrypha* 1 (1974), 3–6.

³⁶Cassiodorus, *Variae*, VII.15, ed. Mommsen, 211; ed. Fridh, 274; trans. Hodgkin, 331.

³⁷The term was freely used in late antiquity. A person could and did claim to have “renovated” a city after having done little more than repair a cistern floor or install a few feet of drainpipe, as pointed out by P. Brown, “Art and Society in Late Antiquity,” *Age of Spirituality: A Symposium*, ed. K. Weitzmann (Princeton, 1980), 17–27, on 19. However, as will be seen, Theoderic's work as a builder and restorer went far beyond such token repairs and more than earned him the epithet “renovator.”

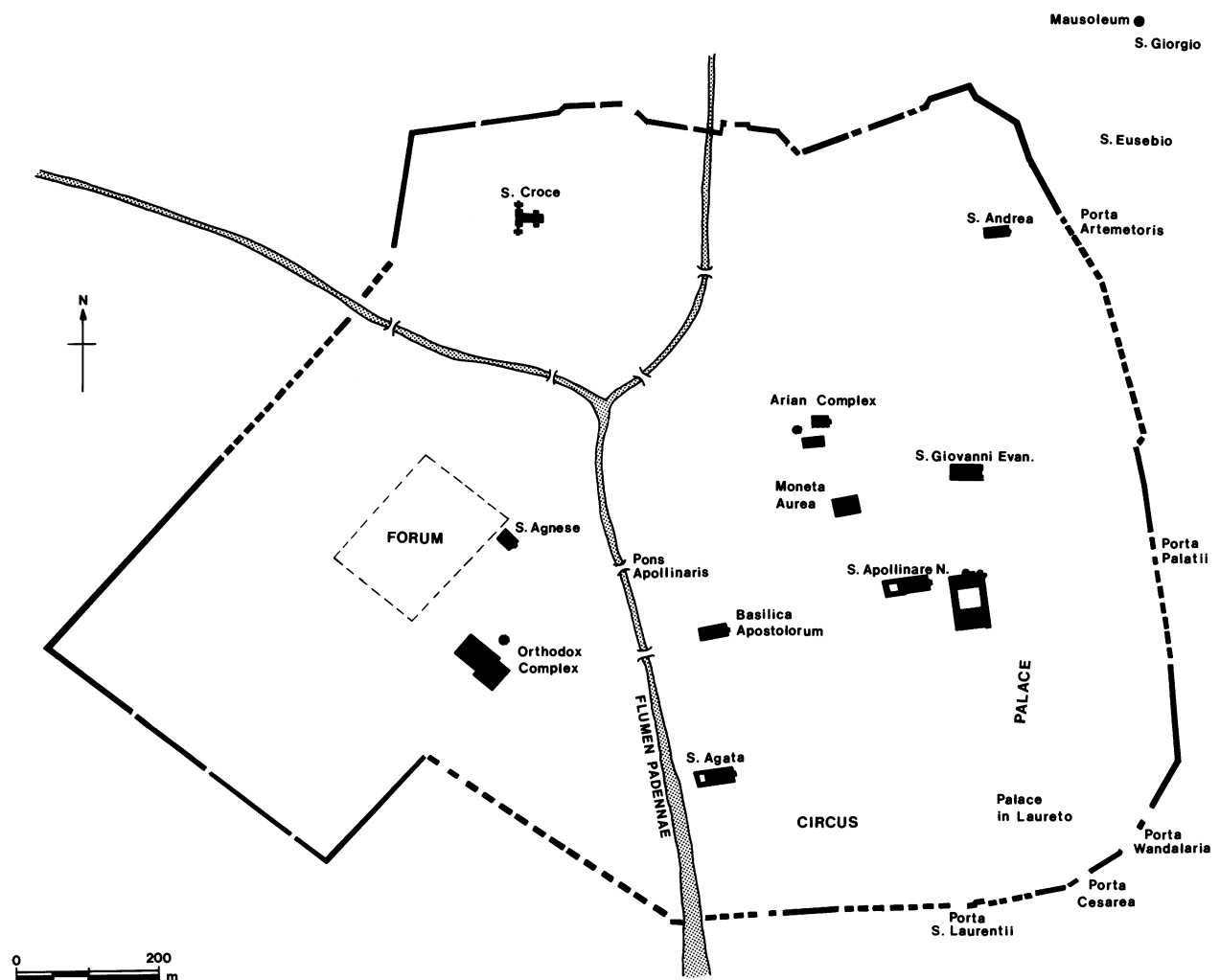
³⁸Cassiodorus, *Variae*, III.31, ed. Mommsen, 95; ed. Fridh, 119; trans. Hodgkin, 213.

³⁹*Ibid.*, I.28, ed. Mommsen, 29; ed. Fridh, 35; trans. Hodgkin, 160. See also II.7, III.44.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, IV.51, ed. Mommsen, 139; ed. Fridh, 179; trans. Hodgkin, 263.



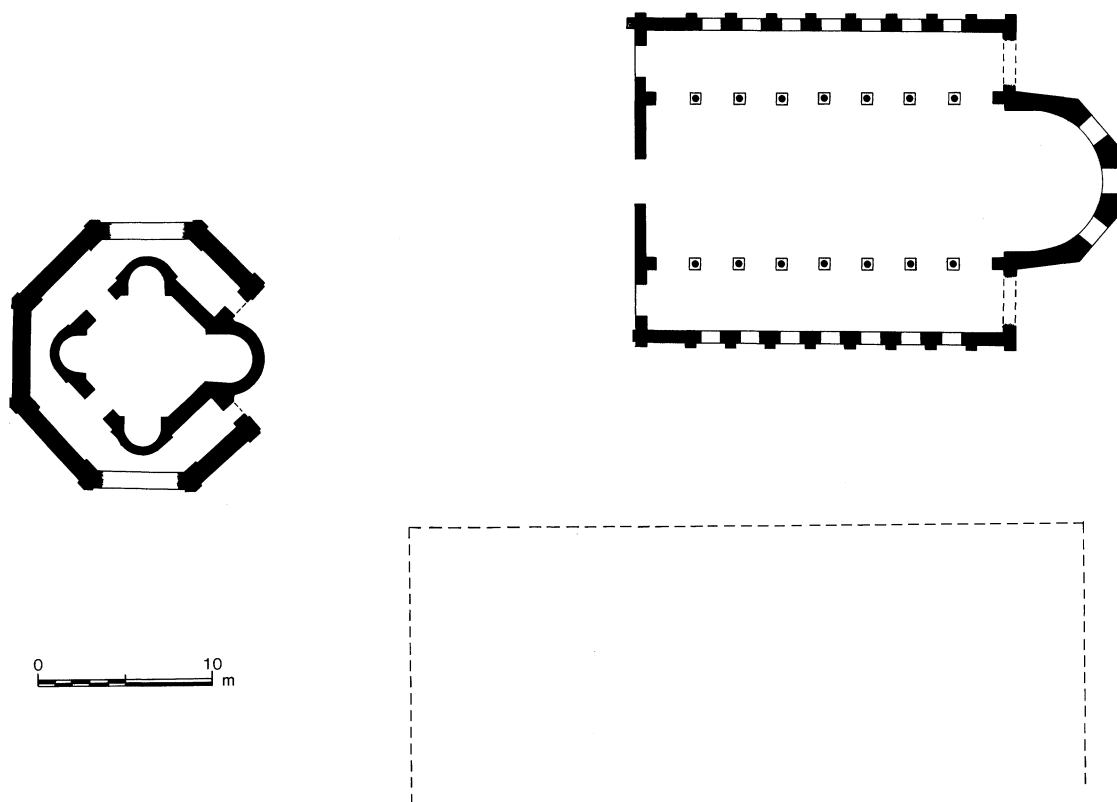
1 Gold medallion of Theoderic, ca. 500
(photo: Deutsche Archäologische Institut)



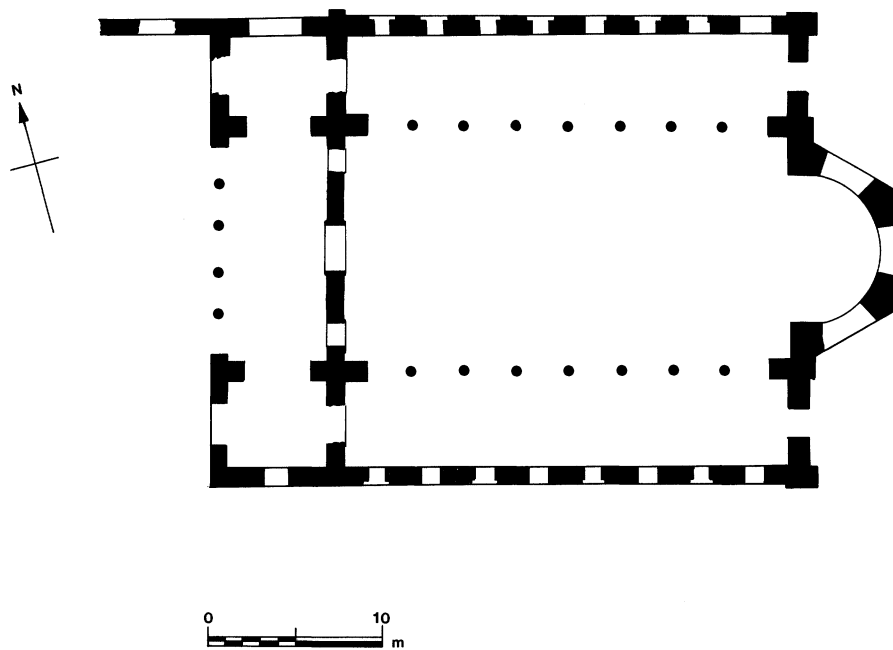
2 Ravenna, map of the city, period of Theoderic



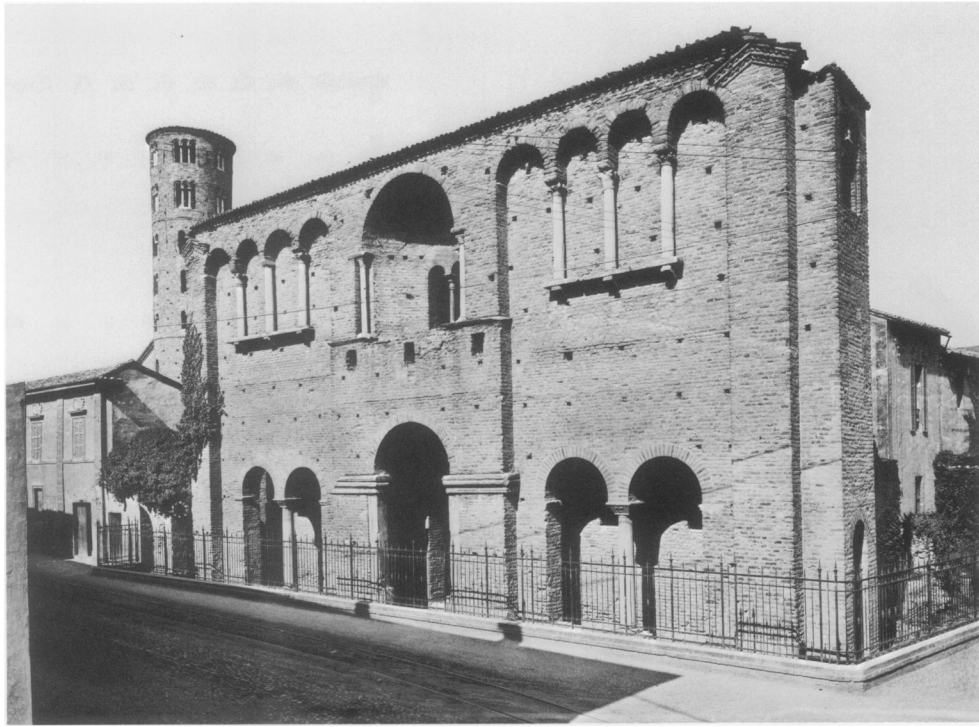
3 Ravenna, Arian Episcopal Complex (S. Spirito and Baptistery)



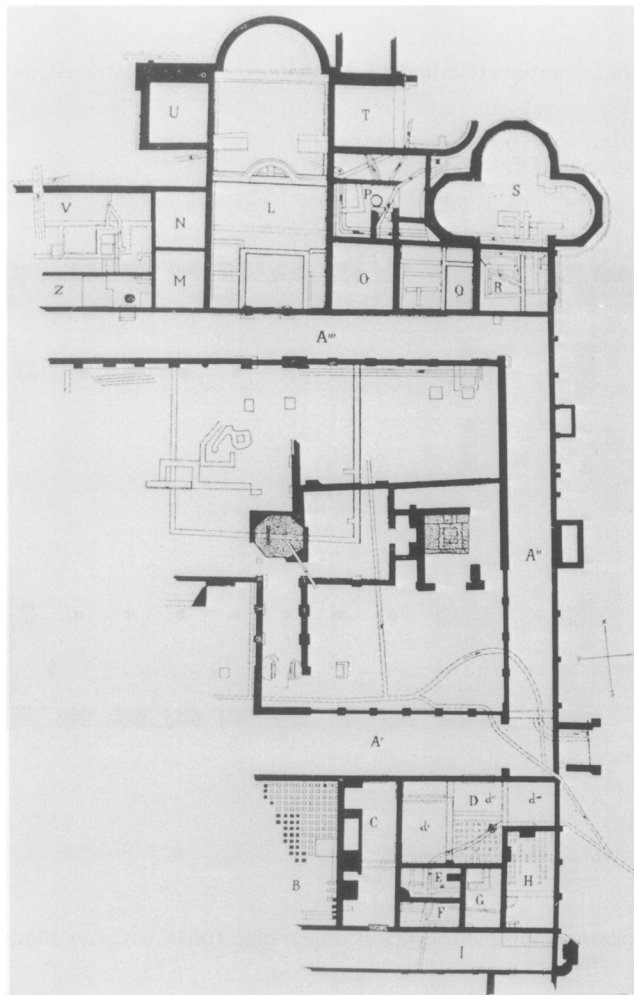
4 Arian Episcopal Complex (Cathedral, Baptistry, Palace), plan (redrawn after Deichmann)



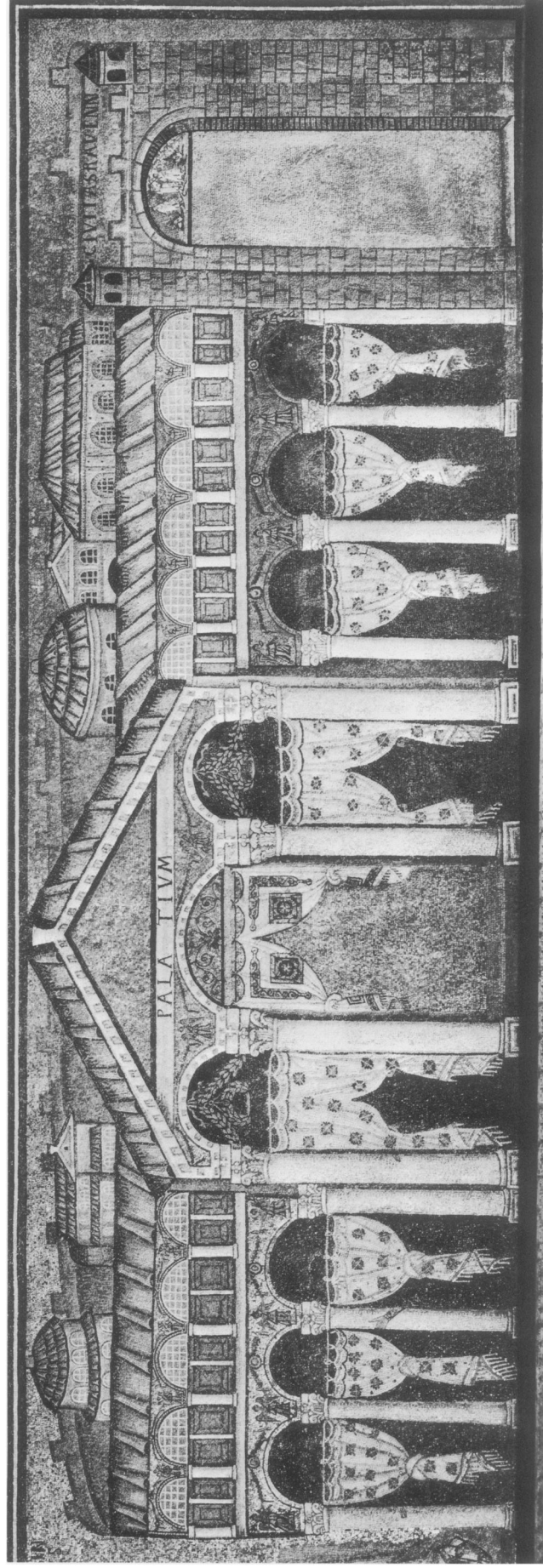
5 Constantinople, Stoudios Basilica, plan (redrawn after Mathews)



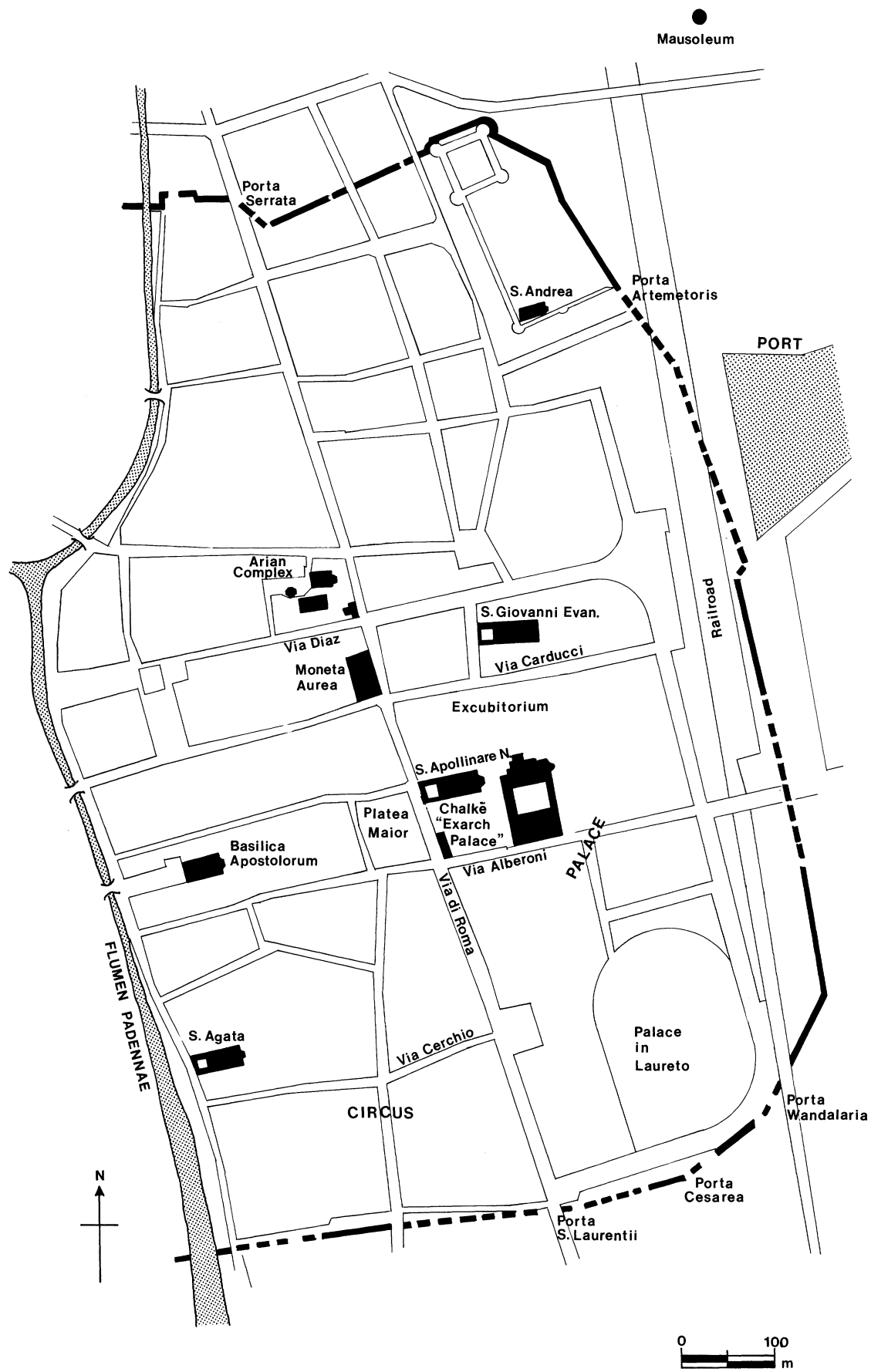
6 Ravenna, so-called "Palace of the Exarchs," west facade (photo: Anderson)



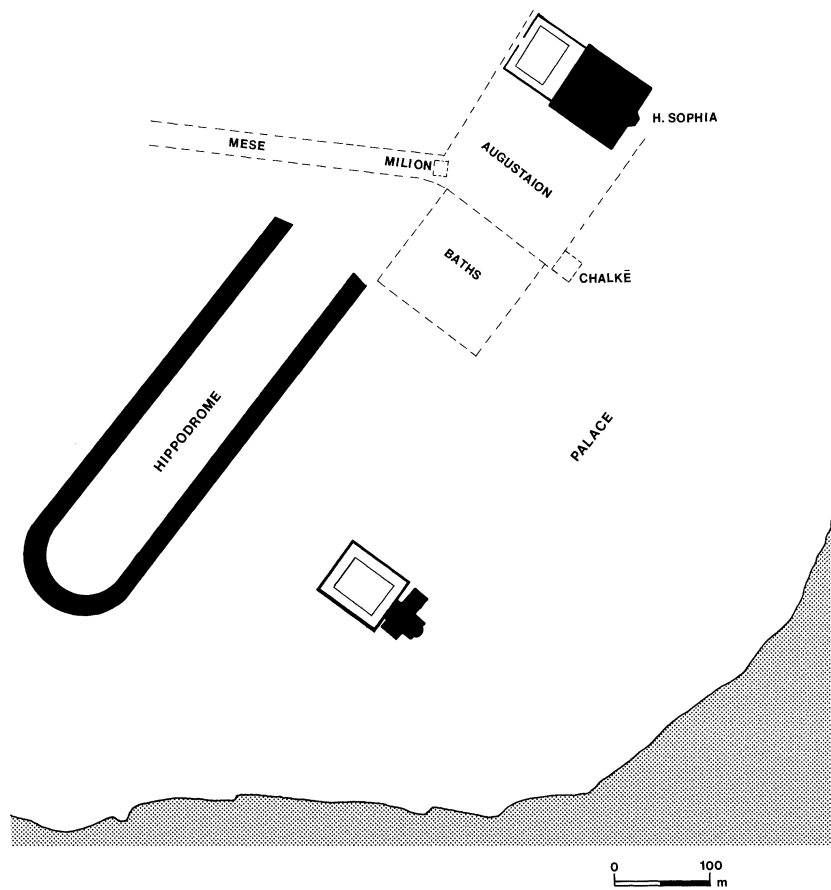
7 Ravenna, Palace of Theoderic, plan of excavations (after Ghirardini, pl. II)



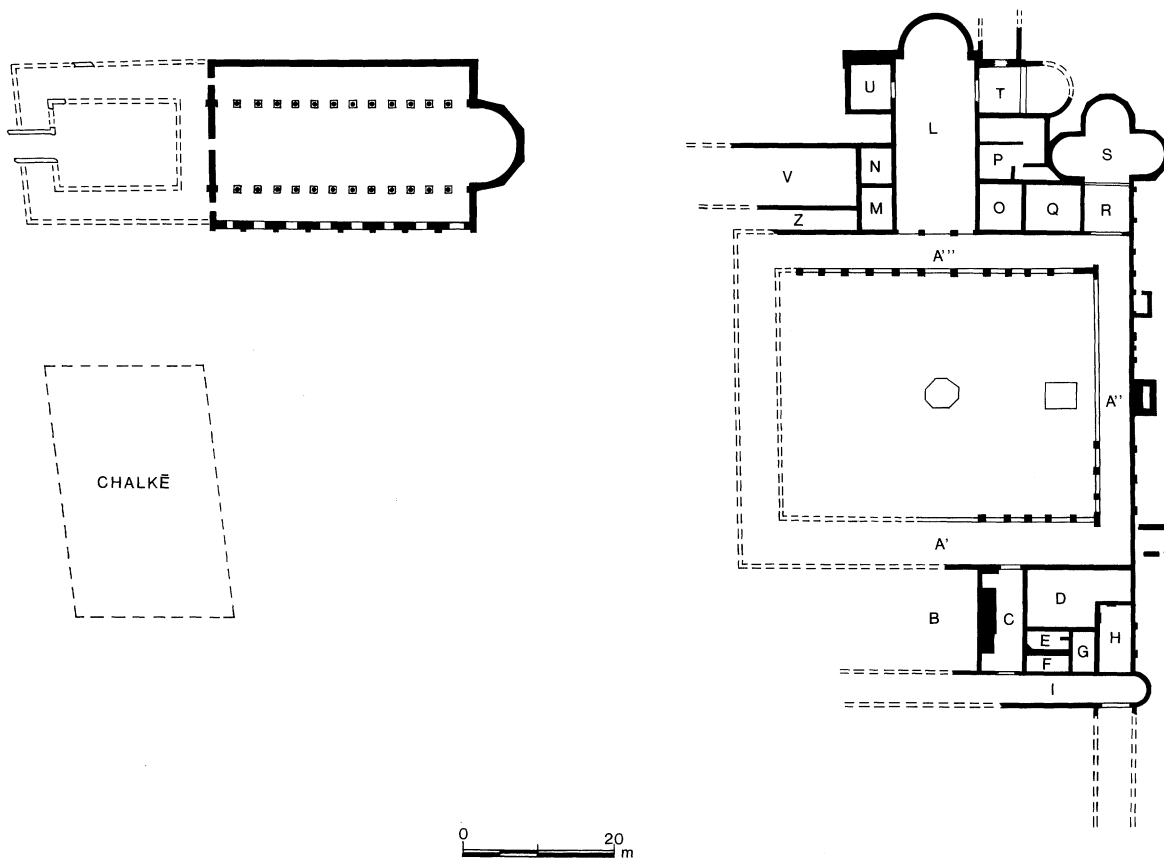
8 Ravenna, S. Apollinare Nuovo, "Palatium" mosaic (photo: Alinari)



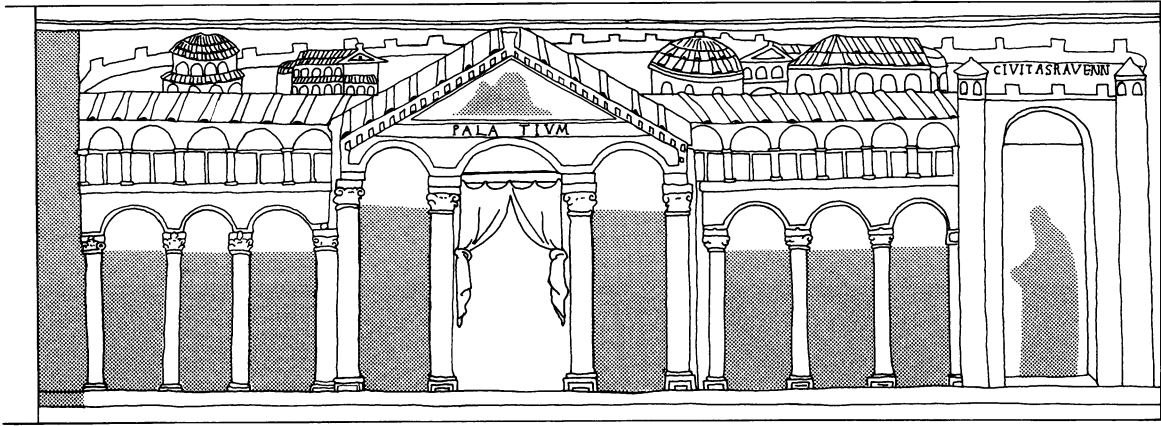
9 Ravenna, map of eastern part of the city showing the topography of the palace



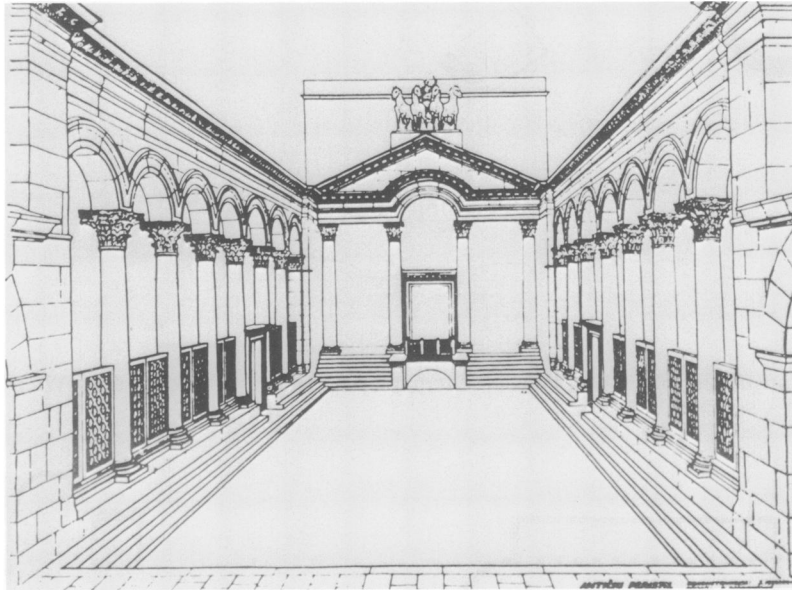
10 Constantinople, Great Palace, schematic plan (redrawn after Müller-Wiener)



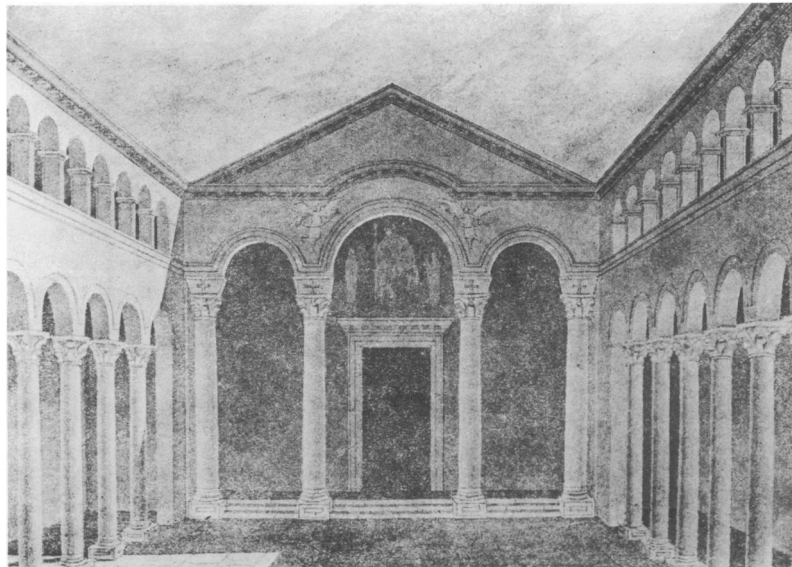
11 Ravenna, Palace of Theoderic, plan, partially restored



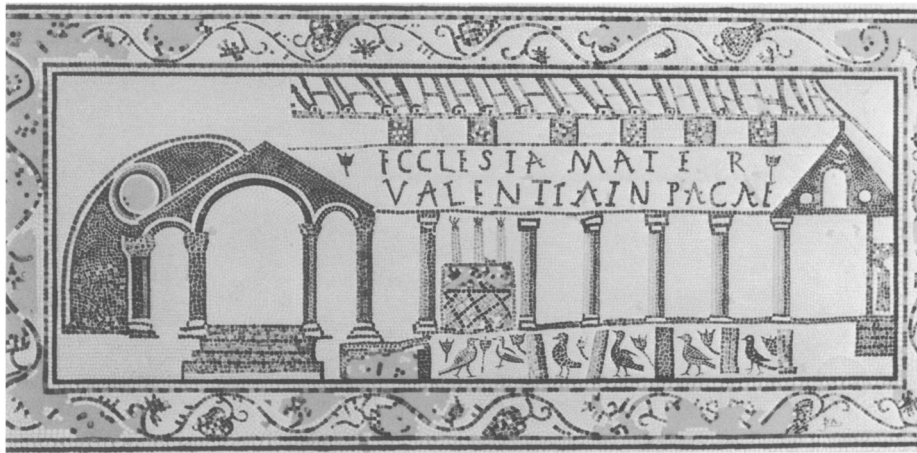
12 Palatium mosaic, drawing showing changes made after 540 (redrawn after Ricci and Deichmann)



13 Split, Palace of Diocletian, "Peristyle" (reconstruction by T. Marasović)



14 Palatium mosaic, building as reconstructed by Dyggve (after Dyggve, pl. xii)



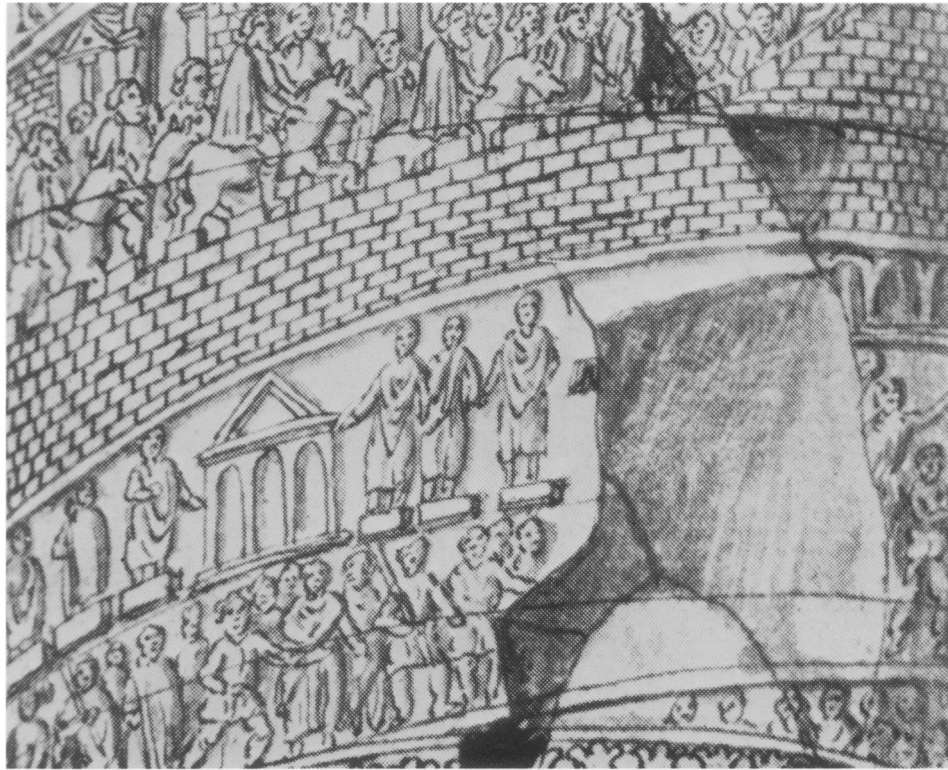
15 Tabarka, mosaic of the Mater Ecclesia (after Gauckler, pl. xviii)



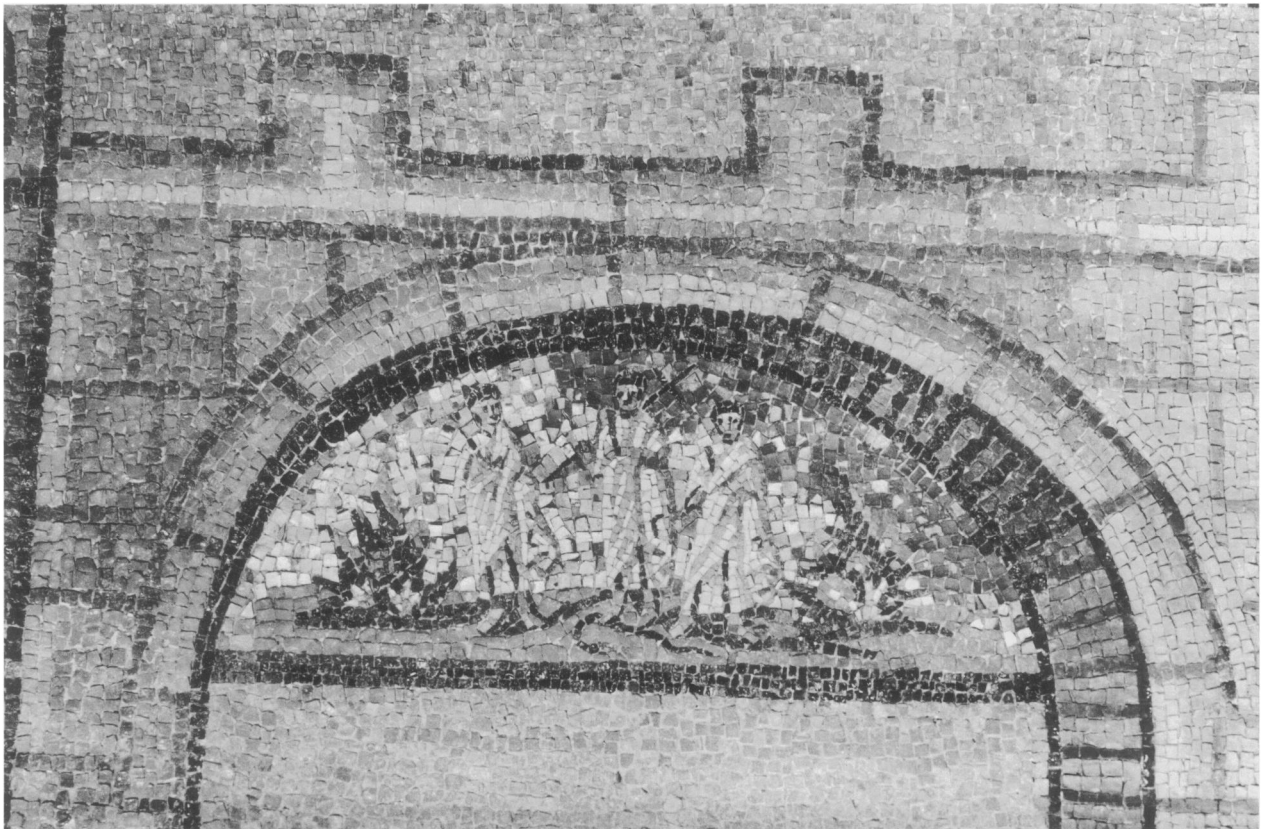
16 Utrecht Psalter, palace, illustration to Ps. 44 (45), fol. 26r (after De Wald, pl. xli)



17 Damascus, Great Mosque, facade facing courtyard (after Creswell)



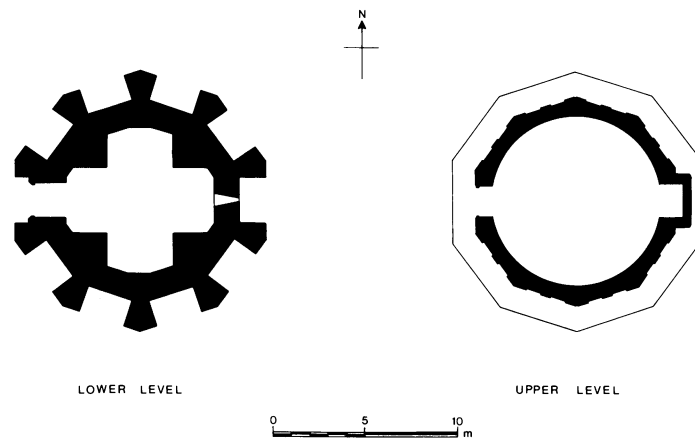
18 Constantinople, Column of Arcadius, west side, detail of building identified as the Chalke of Constantinople, drawing from Freshfield Album (after Freshfield, pl. xix [detail])



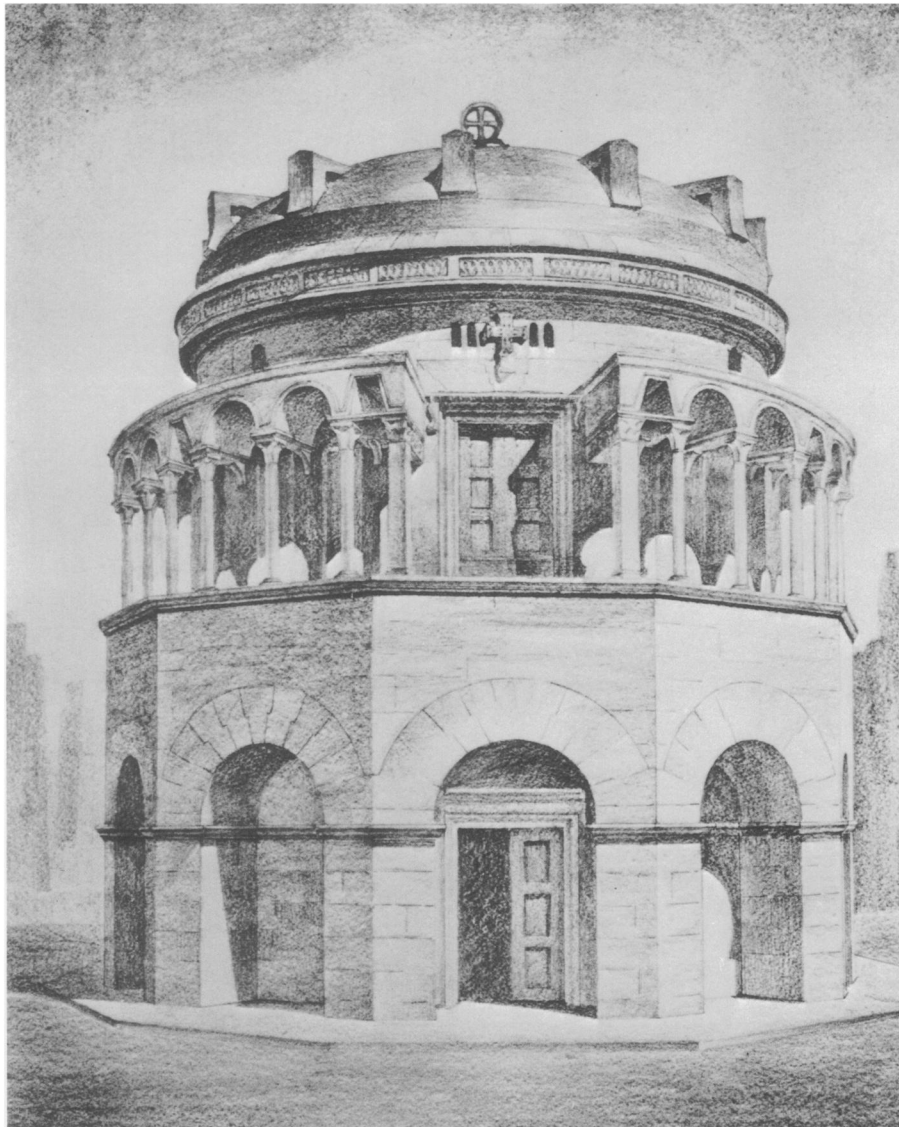
19 Ravenna, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Palatium mosaic, detail of lunette of the city gate (photo: Deutsche Archäologische Institut)



20 Ravenna, Mausoleum of Theoderic, view from west



21 Mausoleum of Theoderic, plan (redrawn after Heydenreich)



22 Mausoleum of Theoderic, reconstruction of exterior by De Angelis d'Ossat (after De Angelis d'Ossat [1961], p. 75, fig. 11)

cities.”⁴¹ Cassiodorus wrote that “under his well-disposed rule very many cities were renovated, the most fortified castles were built, palaces worthy of admiration arose, and the ancient wonders were excelled by his great works.”⁴² Ennodius, with his characteristic panegyrical hyperbole, exclaims: “I see cities with an unexpected decor rise from the ashes and the roofs of palaces standing out everywhere in the plentiful state. I see buildings finished before the news that they are even being constructed reaches me!”⁴³

Theoderic paid particular attention to the task of rebuilding Rome.⁴⁴ One of the more significant projects was the rebuilding of the imperial residence on the Palatine, paid for by revenues from a special tax.⁴⁵ He also “had the city walls rebuilt for which the Senate honored him with a gilded statue.”⁴⁶ In addition, work was carried out on the Curia of the Senate,⁴⁷ repairs were made to the Theater of Pompey,⁴⁸ the aqueducts,⁴⁹ the sewers,⁵⁰ and a granary.⁵¹ Statues were raised in the Amphitheatrum Flaviae and elsewhere.⁵² This interest in the rebuilding of Rome, and particularly the repair of the palace and the Curia, demonstrates an intense interest in the heritage of the ancient capital.

Theoderic also undertook several large-scale building projects throughout his kingdom. A new city was founded in the territory of Trent.⁵³ Funds

were sent to the architect Aloisius for the repair of the baths and an old palace at Abano, the ancient Aponum near modern Padua.⁵⁴ City walls were repaired at Arles⁵⁵ and at Catania, where the amphitheater, long out of use, provided a ready quarry.⁵⁶ At Parma an aqueduct was either restored or built at this time, as were, possibly, the city walls.⁵⁷

Pavia and Verona were Theoderic's secondary capitals and received special attention. At the former he built a palace with a throne room containing a mosaic portrait of himself, as well as baths, an amphitheater, and new city walls.⁵⁸ In Verona Theoderic built baths, new city walls, and another palace which was connected to a city gate by a colonnaded street.⁵⁹ Sources mention yet another palace at Monza, a structure that was perhaps rebuilt by the Longobard queen, Theodelinda,⁶⁰ while less

⁵⁴ Ibid., II.39.

⁵⁵ Ibid., III.44.

⁵⁶ Ibid., III.49.

⁵⁷ Ibid., VIII.29–30; L. Grazzi, *Parma romana* (n.p., 1972), 283–88; V. Banzola, “Parma barbarica: Dal tardo antico ai Franchi,” in *Parma: La città storica* (Parma, 1978), 69–82.

⁵⁸ *Excerpta Valesiana*, 71, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 552, 553. The palace is also mentioned by Paulus Diaconus, *De gestis langobardorum*, II.27, PL 95, cols. 497–98, while the mosaic is mentioned by Agnellus, *Liber pontificalis Ecclesiae Ravennatis*, c. 94, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, *ScriptorLangob* (Hannover, 1878), 337; ed. A. Testi-Rasponi, RISS, n.s. II, pt. 3 (Bologna, 1922), 227; cf. E. Müntz, “The Lost Mosaics of Ravenna,” *AJA* 1 (1885), 115–30, esp. 123 f. On the palace and its location see G. Romano, “Di un supposto Palazzo reale presso S. Pietro in Ciel d’oro,” *Bollettino della società pavese di storia patria* 7 (1907), 133–54; C. Brühl, “Das ‘Palatium’ von Pavia und die ‘Honorantiae Civitatis Papiae,’” *Atti del IV congresso internazionale di studi sull’alto medioevo* . . . 1967 (Spoleto, 1969), 189–220; D. A. Bullough, “Urban Change in Early Medieval Italy: The Example of Pavia,” *BSR* 34 (1966), 82–130, esp. 88 ff; M. Cagiano de Azevedo, “Gli edifici menzionati da Paolo Diacono nella *Historia Langobardorum*,” *Atti del convegno di studi longobardi* (Udine . . . 1969) (Udine, 1970), 73–89, esp. 79 f; P. Hudson, *Archeologia urbana e programmazione della ricerca: L’esempio di Pavia* (Florence, 1981), 23 f; and B. Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity to the End of the Middle Ages: Urban Public Building in Northern and Central Italy AD 300–850* (Oxford, 1984), 159–60.

⁵⁹ *Excerpta Valesiana*, 71. In general see C. G. Mor, “Dalla caduta dell’Impero al Comune,” *Verona e suo territorio*, II (Verona, 1964), 3 ff, esp. 5–12; G. Marchini, “Verona romana e paleocristiana,” *Ritratto di Verona: Lineamenti di una storia urbanistica*, ed. L. Puppi (Verona, 1978), 23–134, esp. 88 ff. On the palace see also E. Rossini, “Il palazzo di Teodorico a Verona,” *Vita veronese* 16 (1963), 435–39; L. Franzoni, “Un nuovo contributo al problema del ‘Palatium’ teodoriciano a Verona,” *ibid.*, 18 (1965), 443–44; B. Thordemann, “Un sigillo ed un palazzo,” *ibid.*, 445–52. On the walls see also A. Bevilacqua Lazise, “La cinta teodoricianica di Verona,” *Madonna Verona* 5 (1911), 227–39.

⁶⁰ The testimony of a palace built by Theoderic at Monza comes from Paulus Diaconus, *De gestis langobardorum*, IV.27, PL 95, col. 551: “Quo in loco etiam Theudericus quondam Gothorum rex palatium construxit, pro eo quod aestivo tempore locus ipse, ut pote vicinus Alpibus, temperatus, ac salubris existit.” For the question of its location see Cagiano de Azevedo, “Edifici,” 80–82; L. Cracco Ruggini, “Monza imperiale e regia,” *Atti* . . . 1967 (above, note 58), 377–91, esp. 379 f.

⁴¹ *Excerpta Valesiana*, 70, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 552, 553.

⁴² Cassiodorus, *Chronica*, a. 500, ed. Mommsen, 160.

⁴³ Ennodius, *Panegyricus*, c. 56, ed. Vogel, 210.

⁴⁴ In general see Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I.21, III.31, IV.30, VII.7, 9, 15, 17; L. Danese, *Rinascita edilizia di Roma ed ultimi bagliori d’arte classica sotto re Teodorico (493–526)* (Trani, 1924); G. Della Valle, “Teoderico e Roma,” *RendAccNap*, n.s. 34 (1959), 119–76; V. Righini, “Felix Roma—Felix Ravenna: I bolli laterizi di Teoderico e l’attività edilizia teodericianica in Ravenna,” *CorsiRav* 33 (1986), 371–98, esp. 372–80. The fame of his building activity at Rome reached as far as Syria; see Zacharias Rhetor, *The Syriac Chronicle Known as That of Zachariah of Mitylene*, trans. F. Hamilton and E. Brooks (London, 1899), 146.

⁴⁵ *Excerpta Valesiana*, 67, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 550, 551. Brick stamps bearing his name were found in the so-called hippodrome of the palace. See also L. Ungaro, “Note sulle strutture tarde del palazzo imperiale sul Palatino,” *RArch* 3 (1979), 106–13.

⁴⁶ Isidorus, *Historia gothorum vandalorum sveborum*, I.39, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, *AA*, XI, 283; *Isidore of Seville’s History of the Kings of the Goths, Vandals and Suevi*, trans. G. Donini and G. Ford (Leiden, 1966), 19. See also Cassiodorus, *Variae*, II.34; G. Della Valle, “Moenia,” *RendAccNap*, n.s. 33 (1958), 167–76.

⁴⁷ *CIL*, VI, 1794; A. Bartoli, “Lavori nella sede del Senato romano al tempo di Teodorico,” *BullComm* 63 (1949–50), 77–88.

⁴⁸ Cassiodorus, *Variae*, IV.51.

⁴⁹ Ibid., III.30, 53; VII.6.

⁵⁰ Ibid., III.30.

⁵¹ Ibid., III.29.

⁵² *CIL*, VI, 32094. See also below, note 143.

⁵³ Cassiodorus, *Variae*, V.9.

trustworthy local traditions place other palaces at Spoleto and Terracina.⁶¹ Less ambitious royal dwellings include the hunting villa mentioned in a contemporary source, which has been excavated at Galeata near Forlì,⁶² and the small palace and adjoining baths apparently used by Theoderic during his siege of Ravenna which have been partially excavated just outside the city walls at S. Maria Palazzolo.⁶³

III

The focus of Theoderic's patronage, however, was on his capital, Ravenna (Fig. 2).⁶⁴ Like Rome, this was a city with an imperial tradition, going back to 402 when Honorius moved the capital here from Milan. This tradition most likely inspired Theoderic to establish his own capital here and to embellish it accordingly. Fortunately, several of his monuments remain in the city, and documentation exists for many others now destroyed.

Theoderic began his work with some necessary renovations. Important to the city, which lacked abundant fresh water, was the restoration of the aqueduct originally built by Trajan, the only build-

ing project specifically mentioned in the *Chronica* of Cassiodorus.⁶⁵ Lead *fistulae* that carried the water and that bear Theoderic's name have been found near the so-called "Palace of the Exarchs."⁶⁶ An inscription recording a drainage project was found in the same area.⁶⁷

Another of Theoderic's projects is mentioned in his letter to Agapitus, the *praefectus urbis Romae*: "I am going to build a great Basilica of Hercules at Ravenna for I wish my age to match preceding ones in the beauty of its buildings." He asks that mosaicists or marble workers be sent from Rome.⁶⁸ E. Dyggve argued that this building was part of the palace and was meant to serve a "most special function of glorification."⁶⁹ However, even though a comment about building palaces immediately precedes the part of the letter here quoted, it is just as likely that the building served some civic function in the tradition of ancient basilicas.⁷⁰ It was probably located away from the palace in the Regio Herculana near the church of S. Agnese, with both the basilica and the region taking their names from the colossal statue of Hercules that stood near the church.⁷¹

Most of the building activity of Theoderic seems to have taken place in the eastern part of the city where he and his followers established themselves. This area already was the site of the church of S.

⁶¹ For Spoleto see F. Bucher and B. Toscano, "The Palace of Theoderic in Spoleto," *Gesta* 2 [3] (1964); idem, "The Spoleto Excavation, II. Interim Report," *ibid.*, 4 (1965), 30–32; for Terracina see Hodgkin, *Italy and Her Invaders*, III.4, 278–79.

⁶² *Vita S. Hilari ab. Galeatensis*, c. 7, *ActaSS*, Maii, III (1738), 474. See S. Fuchs, "Galeata vorläufiger Bericht," *AA* (1942), cols. 259–77; idem, "Der Palast des Theoderich in Galeata bei Forlì," *Germanien* 15 (1943), 109–18; G. Iacopi, "Galeata (Forlì): Scavi in località Saetta," *NS*, 7th ser. 4 (1944), 204–12; P. Léveque, "Le palais de Théodoric-le-grand à Galeata," *RA*, 6th ser. 28 (1947), 58–61; U. Monneret de Villard, "Sul palazzo di Teodorico a Galeata," *RendLinc*, 8th ser. 7 (1952), 26–32; E. B. Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1956), 141; M. Cagianò de Azevedo, "Ville rustiche tardoantiche e installazioni agricole altomedievali," *Settimane* 13 (1965), 663–94; E. Leoncini, *Il palazzo del Re degli ostrogoti Teodorico in Galeata (Forlì)* (Forlì, 1968).

⁶³ The palace is mentioned by Agnellus, c. 39, ed. Holder-Egger, 304; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 106–8, who used its ruins as a quarry for building materials. For the excavations see G. Bermond Montanari, "S. Maria Palazzolo (Ravenna)," *ArhVest* 23 (1972), 212–18; idem, "La zona archeologica di Palazzolo," *CorsiRav* 30 (1983), 17–21.

⁶⁴ The map (Fig. 2) is based on several studies of the city's topography, including G. Bovini, "Le origini di Ravenna e lo sviluppo della città in età romana," *FR* 70 (1956), 38–60 and 72 (1956), 27–68; P. Verzone, "Ipotesi di topografia ravennate," *CorsiRav* 13 (1966), 433–43; M. Mazzotti, "Note di antica topografia ravennate," *ibid.*, 14 (1967), 219–31; B. Felletti Maj, "Una carta di Ravenna romana e bizantina," *RendPontAcc* 41 (1968–69), 85–120; L. Zaffagnini, "Note di geomorfologia del territorio ravennate—vie di comunicazione fluviale e topografia urbana," *FR* 99–100 (1969), 65–129; G. Bermond Montanari, "La topografia della città di Ravenna e del suo territorio attraverso le testimonianze archeologiche," *FR* 109–10 (1975), 59–77. Also helpful are the notes in Agnellus, ed. Testi-Rasponi.

⁶⁵ *Chronica*, a. 502, ed. Mommsen, 160; also mentioned in *Variae*, V.38; *Excerpta Valesiana*, 71. See also A. Santarelli, "Forlì," *NS* (1882), 41; A. Zannoni, *Scoperta dell'acquedotto di Traiano e considerazioni relative* (Ravenna, 1886).

⁶⁶ G. Bovini, *Storia e architettura degli edifici paleocristiani di culto di Ravenna* (Bologna, 1964), 9, cites the inscription of one: "D(OMINVS) N(OSTRO) REX THEODORICVS CIVITATI REDDIDIT." See also idem, "Le origini di Ravenna," *FR* 72 (1956), 41, with bibliography.

⁶⁷ *CIL*, XI, 10. See also F. W. Deichmann, *Ravenna: Hauptstadt des spätantiken Abendlandes, II. Kommentar* (Wiesbaden, 1976) (hereafter Deichmann, *Kommentar*), I, 127; M. Baratta, "Ravenna felix," *La geografia* 18 (1930), 5–44, on 10.

⁶⁸ Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I.6, ed. Mommsen, 16–17; ed. Fridh, 17; trans. Hodgkin, 147.

⁶⁹ E. Dyggve, "Excursus sulla 'Basilica Herculis' ricordata da Cassiodorus," *CorsiRav* (1957), pt. 2, 75–78, on 77; idem, "Basilica Herculis," in *Festschrift W. Sas-Zaloziecky* (Graz, 1956), 34–39; idem, "La SS. Cattedra di S. Pietro ed il suo ambiente storico primordiale," *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 1 (1960), 13–43. Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity*, 163, believes that it was a hall in the palace complex.

⁷⁰ F. W. Deichmann, *Ravenna: Hauptstadt des spätantiken Abendlandes, I. Geschichte und Monumente* (Wiesbaden, 1969) (hereafter Deichmann, *Geschichte*), 41.

⁷¹ A. Zirardini, *Degli antichi edifici profani di Ravenna* (Faenza, 1762; rpr. Ravenna, 1971), 197–201. The "Regione Herculana" is mentioned by Agnellus, c. 23, ed. Holder-Egger, 289; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 67 and note 5, as well as in a document of 982; see M. Fantuzzi, *Monumenti ravennati de' secoli di mezzo*, 6 vols. (Venice, 1801–5), V, 253. The statue existed until 1591 when it collapsed in an earthquake. See Baratta, "Ravenna felix," 30.

Giovanni Evangelista, built by Galla Placidia, and the Palace in Laureto, attributable to Valentinian III, indicating that this was the imperial quarter of the city.⁷²

The most important of Theoderic's ecclesiastical foundations was the Arian episcopal complex (Fig. 3) which included the cathedral, now known as S. Spirito but originally dedicated to the Anastasis, a baptistery, and a now destroyed bishop's palace (Fig. 4).⁷³ The cathedral is a small building with a plan of rather squat proportions. Instead of the usual twelve columns flanking each side of the nave as in most other Ravennate churches, there are only seven in each arcade. Also, the nave itself is wider than the combined width of both side aisles, a characteristic found only in one other church in Ravenna, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Theoderic's palace chapel.⁷⁴ The apse was built in the manner typical of the period, semicircular internally with a polygonal exterior. A Renaissance portico now precedes the church, but it is not known if originally an atrium stood in its place. Windows in the clerestory, apse, and side aisles, as well as a triple window in the center of the facade, provided

light for the interior. Externally these windows are set in wall arcades, recalling the similar treatment at S. Giovanni Evangelista.

In front and slightly to the south of the cathedral is the baptistery. It was originally a double-shell octagon in plan with four semicircular niches in the central space. This central area is covered by a dome which rises on a drum pierced by clerestory windows above the original roof level of the now destroyed ambulatory. Of its original decoration, only the mosaics of the dome now remain. These depict the Baptism of Christ in a central medallion, surrounded by the twelve Apostles who are shown approaching an empty throne. Excavations under the floor in the early part of this century, however, revealed that the original decoration was much more lavish. Numerous fragments of polychromed stucco and no less than 170 kilograms of mosaic tesserae which had fallen from the walls were uncovered.⁷⁵

Nothing remains of the rest of the complex, although its existence is known from Agnellus who mentions an upper-floor chapel dedicated in his time to St. Apollinaris.⁷⁶ M. Mazzotti has identified foundations excavated on the corner of Via Diaz and Via di Roma with this building, though there is no evidence for this attribution other than their proximity to the cathedral.⁷⁷

This complex offers an insight into Theoderic's religious politics. Tolerant of the Orthodox, he attempted to make the buildings of the Arians equal to those of the Orthodox church, thus playing down the differences between the two sects.⁷⁸ The dedication of the cathedral to the Anastasis, if this was in fact its original dedication, was the same as that of the Orthodox cathedral in Ravenna. The

⁷²On S. Giovanni Evangelista see Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 152–57 and idem, *Kommentar*, I, 91–124. On the Palace in Laureto see Agnellus, c. 40, ed. Holder-Egger, 304–5; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 115; Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 42; Zirardini, *Ravenna*, 71–83; and Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity*, 158, who surmises that it was an addition to the palace of Honorius. Its exact location is uncertain, but it is known to have been in the southeast quarter of the city between the Porta Wandalara and the palace built by Theoderic. Another palace in the area, built by Odoacer, is mentioned in the *Chronica de civitate Ravennae*, in the *Spicilegium Ravennatis Historica*, RISS, I.2 (Milan, 1723), 576. G. De Angelis d'Ossat, "La basilica di S. Maria Maggiore a Ravenna e le dimore sovrane della 'II regio,'" *CorsiRav* 22 (1975), 146–56, rpr. in his *Realità dell'architettura: Apporti alla sua storia*, 1933–78, I (Rome, 1982), 481–91, tried to link this palace with the structure that was converted into the apse of this church in the northwest part of the city, but the source places it near the circus; see below.

⁷³From the Byzantine conquest to the 16th century, the church was dedicated to St. Theodore. On the complex see esp. M. Mazzotti, "La 'Anastasis Gothorum' di Ravenna ed il suo battistero," *FR* 75 (1957), 25–62; M. Breschi, *La cattedrale ed il battistero degli Arianisti a Ravenna*, Collana di quaderni di antichità ravennate cristiane e bizantine 6 (Ravenna, 1965); Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 207–12 and *Kommentar*, I, 241–58. The original dedication of the cathedral is found in a papyrus of 551, "Aclise Gotice Sancte Anastasie," in Marini, *Papiri*, 182, no. cxix. Some scholars have argued that this refers to another church dedicated to Saint Anastasia. See Deichmann, *Kommentar*, II, 300–303; idem, "Ancora sulla 'Ecclesia legis Gothorum S. Anastasiae,'" *FR* 111–12 (1976), 113–18; R. Farioli, *Ravenna romana e bizantina* (Ravenna, 1977), 130. For its dedication to St. Theodore see Mazzotti, "Anastasis," 29; for its subsequent dedication to S. Spirito, Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 255–58.

⁷⁴G. De Angelis d'Ossat, "Spazialità e simbolismo delle basiliche ravennate," *CorsiRav* 17 (1970), 313–33, on 326; rpr. in idem, *Realità*, 367–84.

⁷⁵G. Gerola, "Il restauro del Battistero ariano di Ravenna," in *Studien zur Kunst des Ostens: Josef Strzygowski zum sechzigsten Geburtstag von seinen Freunden und Schülern* (Vienna, 1923), 112–29, esp. 122. Traces of mosaic on the lower walls are reported by S. Ghigi, "Il battistero degli arianisti a Ravenna," *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per le provincie di Romagna*, 4th ser. 6 (1916), 278–315, on 313.

⁷⁶"Infra urbem vero Ravenam, ecclesiam sancti Theodori non longe a domo Drocconis, qua domus una cum balneo et sancti Apolenaris monasterio, quod in superiora domus structum, episcopium ipsius ecclesie fuit"; Agnellus, c. 86, ed. Holder-Egger, 334; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 217. See also Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 251, II, 307; R. Farioli, "Ravenna paleocristiana scomparsa," *FR* 83 (1961), 5–88, on 23 (also published as a book with the same title and date). For Agnellus' use of "monasterium" to mean "chapel," see Testi-Rasponi, 61 note 5.

⁷⁷Mazzotti, "Anastasis," 30–31.
⁷⁸See O. von Simson, *Sacred Fortress* (Chicago, 1948), 72; G. Montanari, "Elementi per una ricerca storico-teologica sull' 'arianesimo' nella città di Ravenna," *Atti dei congressi di Cesena e Ravenna*, 1966–67, I (Cesena, 1969), 27–50.

baptistery, though somewhat smaller than the Orthodox one, obviously copied its decoration, as is evident in the remaining mosaic and indicated in G. Gerola's findings which suggest a similar copying in the original wall decoration. Also like the Orthodox complex, the Arian episcopal buildings included a palace with an upper-level chapel.⁷⁹

The cathedral is very similar in plan to the known fifth-century basilicas of Constantinople, best represented by the Studios Basilica (Fig. 5).⁸⁰ The proportions of the two buildings are almost identical:⁸¹ both have seven columns on each side of the nave and an apse that is semicircular internally and polygonal externally. The Studios Basilica, which dates to the 450s or 460s, or perhaps one of its now destroyed contemporaries, appears to have served as the model for the Arian cathedral, built some forty years later. The connection between the church in Ravenna and its Constantinopolitan predecessors is perhaps best explained by Theoderic's stay in the Byzantine capital and the possible participation of a Byzantine architect.

Records exist of other churches built by Theoderic in Ravenna and its suburbs. S. Andrea dei Goti, mentioned by Agnellus, survived until 1457 when it was destroyed by the Venetians to make way for the Rocca Brancaleone in the northeast corner of the city.⁸² Capitals from this church were

reused in the construction of a portico fronting the present Piazza del Popolo. Two churches, S. Giorgio and S. Eusebio, were built outside the city walls; both were destroyed in the thirteenth or fourteenth century.⁸³ The former was located near the Mausoleum of Theoderic; the latter somewhere between these buildings and the city wall. Agnellus mentions two other churches built by Theoderic, S. Zeno in the suburb of Cesarea and S. Sergio in Classe.⁸⁴

IV

Theoderic's most important building project at Ravenna was the construction of a suitable palace for himself and his court. Unfortunately, not enough is known about this complex, and there has often been confusion about it. When a reference is made to the Palace of Theoderic the building that still generally comes to mind is the so-called "Palace of the Exarchs" (Fig. 6), located just south of S. Apollinare Nuovo. This is perhaps due to its palacelike facade and its location in the area of the city known to have contained the palace of the Ostrogothic king. Modern scholars, however, have noted that the technique of its construction reveals that it probably dates to the eighth century if not later.⁸⁵ If this is correct, the building was probably erected as an addition to the then still functioning palace complex, but its original function is uncertain. It was apparently constructed by a Byzantine exarch⁸⁶ or by the Longobards who

⁷⁹The chapel of the Orthodox episcopal complex, the so-called "Cappella Arcivescovile," also dates from the period of Theoderic's reign. See Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 201–6, and *Kommentar*, I, 198–204. This project and others undertaken by the Orthodox bishops, including the building of the dome of their baptistery and the addition of a baptistery to the Basilica Petriana in nearby Classe, are evidence of Theoderic's religious tolerance.

The distinctiveness of Arianism may have been manifested in these buildings in a subtle fashion. The predominant use of the proportion 1:2 in the cathedral has been argued to have been a reflection of the Arian view of the Trinity by De Angelis d'Ossat, "Spazialità," 318–23, who also notes another proportion used in the building, that of the golden mean. For the possible Arian symbolism of letters appearing on the garments of the Apostles see A. Quacquarelli, "Le grammatiche del Battistero degli ariani di Ravenna," *CorsiRav* 24 (1977), 293–301; idem, "La simbologia delle lettere cristologiche nel battistero degli ariani di Ravenna," *Romanobarbarica* 2 (1977), 231–46.

⁸⁰See T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park, 1971), 11–41. On the Studios Basilica see ibid., 19–27; idem, *The Byzantine Churches of Constantinople: A Photographic Survey* (University Park, 1975), 143–58; W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 147–52; C. Mango, "The Date of the Studios Basilica at Istanbul," *BMGS* 4 (1978), 115–22, who argues for a dating before 454; R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 4th ed. (Harmondsworth, 1986), 104–5.

⁸¹As noted by Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 208.

⁸²Agnellus, c. 72, ed. Holder-Egger, 327; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 190; c. 121, ed. Holder-Egger, 357; c. 167, ed. Holder-Egger, 386. See also Deichmann, *Kommentar*, II, 326–28; Farioli, "Ravenna paleocristiana," 52.

⁸³S. Giorgio: Agnellus, c. 70, ed. Holder-Egger, 326; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 187–88; c. 86, ed. Holder-Egger, 334; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 217; Farioli, op. cit., 52; Deichmann, *Kommentar*, II, 325–26. S. Eusebio: Agnellus, c. 86; Farioli, 50–52; Deichmann, *Kommentar*, II, 325.

⁸⁴Agnellus, c. 86, ed. Holder-Egger, 334; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 217. S. Zeno: see also Farioli, "Ravenna paleocristiana," 31; Deichmann, *Kommentar*, II, 376. S. Sergio: Farioli, 23; Deichmann, *Kommentar*, II, 360. None of these churches are known archeologically, nor are their original dedications.

⁸⁵C. Ricci, *Romanesque Architecture in Italy* (New York, n.d.), xiv–xv, dates it to the 8th century; G. Gerola, "L'architettura deuterobizantina in Ravenna," *Ricordi di Ravenna medioevale per il VI centenario della morte di Dante* (Ravenna, 1921), 17–112, esp. 90–93, to the late 7th or early 8th century; G. Galassi, *L'architettura protoromanica nell'Esarcata*, FR, Suppl. 3 (Ravenna, 1928), 95–97, gives the same dating; P. Verzone, "S. Salvatore di Ravenna," *Palladio* 2 (1938), 201–11, dates it to the 11th century; M. Mazzotti, "Il cosiddetto Palazzo di Teodorico," *CorsiRav* (1955), pt. 2, 81–86, dates it to the 9th century; and A. Rusconi, "Una nuova ipotesi sul cosiddetto 'Palazzo di Teodorico' in Ravenna," *CorsiRav* 18 (1971), 475–506, argues for the mid 8th century.

⁸⁶Ricci, *Architecture*, believed it to be the "Calchi Palace," ascribing it to one of the exarchs. Galassi, *Esarcata*, suggested that it was the *Sicreston* mentioned by Agnellus in a passage to be discussed below.

reigned briefly in Ravenna in the mid eighth century.⁸⁷

If this structure, then, was not part of the complex built by Theoderic, what is known about his palace? Literary sources are very meager, with only a few comments by contemporary and later medieval writers. The *Excerpta Valesiana* mention only that Theoderic "completely finished the palace but did not dedicate it. He completed the portico around the palace."⁸⁸ In a panegyric Cassiodorus describes the richness of its decoration: "The plasterwork glistens with the same color as the gems of the marbles [statues?], the gold sprinkled upon it shines in (. . .), and the gifts of mosaic work delineate the veins of the rock [marble revetment?]; and the whole thing is adorned with metallic hues, where the waxen picture should be recognized."⁸⁹

Following the fall of Ravenna to the Byzantines in 540, the palace was used by the exarchs⁹⁰ and afterwards by the Longobard king Astolfus.⁹¹ By the end of the eighth century, though, it was apparently in a ruined state, as Charlemagne asked for and received permission from Pope Hadrian I (772–795) to remove marbles and mosaics for use in his own palace in Aachen.⁹²

⁸⁷Rusconi, "Palazzo," suggests that it was built by the Longobards as a new palace church dedicated to the Savior. Both Gerola, "Ravenna," and Verzone, "S. Salvatore," had previously identified the building with the church dedicated to the Savior which sources indicate existed in the area, the former attributing it to the Byzantines, the latter to a much later period. B. Thordemann, "Il cosiddetto palazzo di Teodorico a Ravenna—un palazzo reale longobardo?" *OpRom* 10 (1974), 23–40, believes that it was a Longobard palace.

⁸⁸*Excerpta Valesiana*, 71, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 552, 553. The porticoes are also mentioned by Johannes Diaconus: "(Theoderic) Palatium quoque grande cum porticibus ibi (Ravennae) construxit"; see G. Tartarotti, "Relazione d'un manoscritto dell'istoria di Giovanni Diacono Veronese," in *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici*, ed. C. Richa, XVIII (Venice, 1738), 133–94, on 183; and a document of 572, cited below, note 101. Cassiodorus, *Orationem reliquae*, ed. Traube, 481, attributes part of the work to Theoderic's daughter, Amalasuntha. He was perhaps referring to the decoration of the building.

⁸⁹*Orationem reliquae*, 483.

⁹⁰"[Abbot Johannes] alia autem lustrata Cesarea egressus est et a Wandalarium portam, quae est vicina portae Cesareae, relicto Laurenti palatio, Theodoricanus ingressus est, iubetque se exarcho praesentare"; Agnellus, c. 132, ed. Holder-Egger, 365, referring to the period 693–709. Procopius, *De bello gothico*, II.29.37, ed. and trans. Dewing, IV, 136, 137; III.1.3, ed. Dewing, IV, 150, 151, states that the treasures "of Theoderic" were taken from the palace by Belisarius to Constantinople where they were displayed in the Great Palace.

⁹¹A document issued under his name in 751 is the last to indicate that the palace was in use: "Dat. Juss. Ravennae in Palatio 4. die mensis Julii anno felicissimi regni nostri 3. per Ind. 4. feliciter"; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, V, 203–4.

⁹²A papal letter gives Charlemagne permission to remove material from the palace: "Praefulgidos atque nectareos regalis potentiae vestrae per Arvinum ducem suscepimus apices, in quibus referebatur, quod palatii Ravennatis civitatis musiva,

Although the palace was certainly ruined and abandoned in the ninth century when Agnellus wrote, he was still able to leave us important information about its topography and some of its decoration. Other clues regarding the topography of the palace are found in numerous documents dating from the sixth to thirteenth centuries, many from church archives in Ravenna.⁹³ Among other things there are several references to a "Tower of the Palace," although it is not certain if this was built by Theoderic or if it was a later structure built in the area.⁹⁴

The limited excavations carried out in 1908–14, just to the east of S. Apollinare Nuovo, uncovered part of the complex (Fig. 7):⁹⁵ a large villa-like building, aligned with the church, with rooms grouped around a central courtyard. Because of the road to the south and property boundaries on the west, the excavators were unable to uncover the whole building. The findings showed that the palace evolved over a long period, with the earliest of the five strata of floor mosaics and architectural elements dating to the second century A.D. Of the limited architectural ornaments found, many date to the fifth century, so it seems that the work of Theoderic was a remodeling and expansion of an older structure.⁹⁶ An important fact, often over-

atque marmora caeteraque exempla tam in strato, quamque in parietibus sitas, vobis tribuissimus: . . . et tam marmora quamque musivum, caeteraque exempla de eodem palatio vobis concedimus auferenda"; Carolus Magnus, *Opera Omnia*, PL 98, col. 371; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, V, 235. Einhard, *Vita Caroli*, c. 26, mentions architectural elements brought to Aachen from Rome and Ravenna. The ruined condition of the palace is also inferred in a letter of Pope Leo III to Charlemagne dated 807; *Epistolae ad imperatorem Carolum missae*, II, PL 98, col. 522. See also P. Verzone, "La demolizione dei palazzi imperiali di Roma e di Ravenna nel quadro delle nuove forze politiche del sec. VIII," *Kunsthistorische Studien: Festschrift Friedrich Gerke* (Baden-Baden, 1962), 77–80.

⁹³Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*; V. Federici, *Regesto di S. Apollinare Nuovo*, *Regesta Chartarum Italiae* 3 (Rome, 1907).

⁹⁴Document of 1132: "Johannes Ab. Monasterii S. Salvatoris Majoris c. p. e. unum tenimentum infra Turrim q. Theodorici Regis et muram civitatis"; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, VI, 244; Federici, *Regesto*, 62, no. 59. The *Chronica de Civitate Ravennae*, a. 1240, RISS, I.2, 578, mentions the "Turrim palatii," while Ricobaldus of Ferrara, *Compilatio Chronologica*, ibid., IX (Milan, 1726), 224, reports: "Post haec tempora, quibus Theodoricus regnabat in Italia, ipse astrui fecit Ravennae egregia opera, Gothicarum turrim Palatii, dirutam anno Christi MCCXCV." See also Zirardini, *Edifici*, 228–30.

⁹⁵G. Ghirardini, "Gli scavi del palazzo di Teodorico a Ravenna," *MonAnt* 24 (1918), cols. 738–838.

⁹⁶For the dating see Ghirardini, "Gli scavi"; F. Berti, "Materiale dai vecchi scavi del Palazzo di Teodorico, I. Le sculture," *FR* 107–8 (1974), 151–67; "II. Elementi di decorazione architettonica e frammenti diversi," *FR* 109–10 (1975), 97–127. Nothing was found in the excavations, such as an inscription, which would directly link any of the phases of this building with

looked, is that only part of the complex was uncovered and that, unfortunately, only a preliminary excavation report was published. The frequently reproduced plan that accompanied this report is actually a confusing composite drawing showing several juxtaposed levels belonging to different periods of construction. In other words, very little archaeological evidence from the palace exists and what little there is has suffered from incomplete publication as well as misinterpretation.

The final evidence that remains is the famous "Palatium" mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo (Fig. 8). It is a very important document in that it shows the architectural character of at least part of the palace, together with its decoration, but its interpretation is somewhat controversial.

It is evident from this outline of the evidence that relatively little is known about the palace. Furthermore, modern scholarship has yet to produce a comprehensive study which examines the evidence in its totality. These objective limitations notwithstanding, some new observations can be made, in particular, a reevaluation of the palace in terms of its iconography and as a reflection of Theoderic's patronage. An examination of the general layout and topography of the palace will be followed by observations on the individual components of the complex and a reexamination of the "Palatium" mosaic.

In his letter to the *cura palatii*, Cassiodorus wrote: "Our court is recognized as having been constructed with a definite plan in mind."⁹⁷ There are several aspects of the palace which suggest that this "definite plan" was in part modeled on the Great Palace of Constantinople.⁹⁸

The influence of the Great Palace can be seen in

general concepts as well as in specific aspects. Like the Great Palace, the Palace of Theoderic was a sprawling, nonaxial complex involving several groups of buildings and large open spaces (Fig. 9).⁹⁹ It included the palace proper, which was perhaps organized around the peristyle court found by G. Ghirardini, and other buildings to the north and south. The northern limit has been identified by C. Carioli with the wall whose remains have been found under the modern Via Carducci, just to the south of S. Giovanni Evangelista.¹⁰⁰ However, there are reasons to believe that the palace complex extended beyond this line. The *Moneta Aurea*, identified with the ruins found at the corner of Via Marciani and Via di Roma, is mentioned in a document of 572 as being in the "portico of the sacred Palace."¹⁰¹ Also, there are later medieval sources referring to the palace, or a part of it, as being "in regione S. Theodori a Vultu (S. Spirito)," which would be to the north and west of S. Giovanni Evangelista.¹⁰² Yet another document refers to the palace as being near the Porta Artemetoris which was located in the northeast section of the city wall.¹⁰³

That the complex extended southward to the city wall is indicated by several factors, including the chance findings of floor mosaics similar to those excavated by Ghirardini.¹⁰⁴ Another piece of evidence is found in a papal bull of 819 which refers to the monastery of S. Stefano in fundamento, later dedicated to S. Chiara and located to the south and east of the "Palace of the Exarchs," as being "next to the Palace."¹⁰⁵ In this southeast corner of the city, the palace complex in all likelihood

Theoderic, but there is no reason to doubt that it did form part of his complex, given both its proximity to the palace church of S. Apollinare Nuovo and the medieval sources that identify this area with the palace. As Berti, 123–24, notes, no such evidence was found most likely because of the near total destruction of the palace. N. Duval proposed an overly cautious designation of the building of the excavations as "an urban villa discovered in the quarter (of the city) traditionally attributed to the palace of Theoderic"; see Duval, "Comment reconnaître un palais impérial ou royal? Ravenne et Piazza Armerina," *FR* 115 (1978), 27–62, on 59.

⁹⁷ *Variae*, VII.5, ed. Mommsen, 204; ed. Fridh, 264; trans. Houghton, "Theoderic," 5.

⁹⁸ On the Great Palace see esp. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 229–37; R. Guillard, *Etudes de topographie de Constantinople byzantine*, 2 vols., BBA 37 (Berlin, 1969). C. Mango, *The Brazen House: A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen, 1959), 26, states that the palace built by Theoderic at Ravenna imitated the Great Palace, as does M. Cagianò de Azevedo, "I palatia imperiali di Treviri, Milano e Ravenna," *Corsi Rav* 25 (1978), 33–44.

⁹⁹ On the topography of Theoderic's palace see the still indispensable work of Zirardini, *Edifici*, 84–156; P. Pasolini, "Del palazzo di Teodorico in Ravenna," *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per le provincie di Romagna*, 2nd ser. 1 (1875), 197–211; F. von Reber, "Der karolingische Palastbau, I. Die Vorbilder," *AbhMunch, Hist.Kl.* 19 (1891), 713–803, esp. 789 ff; C. Carioli, "Note sul Palatium e la *Moneta Aurea* a Ravenna," *FR* 107–8 (1974), 131–50.

¹⁰⁰ Carioli, "Palatium," 139.

¹⁰¹ Marini, *Papiri*, 185, no. cxx. The identification of the ruins with the mint is by no means certain, though the *Moneta Aurea* is known to have been located in this area; see Carioli, "Palatium," 139.

¹⁰² Document of 11 June 1207: Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, I, 340. The same terminology is used in documents of 1208, *ibid.*, I, 342; of 1217, *ibid.*, II, 30; and of 1290, Federici, *Regesto*, 223, no. 354.

¹⁰³ Document of 1226: Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, VI, 185.

¹⁰⁴ Carioli, "Palatium," 136–38; F. Berti, *Regione ottava: Ravenna: I mosaici romani*, I mosaici antichi in Italia 5 (Rome, 1976), 4, 84–85. The present Via Alberoni, which dictated the southern limit of the excavations, was opened only in the 17th century. See Felletti Maj, "Una carta di Ravenna," 102.

¹⁰⁵ *Bullam Paschalis Papae I ad Ravennae Archiepiscopem*, app. to Agnellus, *Liber Pontificalis*, RISS, II.1, 220 (III). On the church

incorporated the Palace in Laureto, part of which, as has been noted, was located near the Porta Wandalaria.¹⁰⁶ The eastern limit was defined by the sea or the city wall, depending on when this part of the wall was built.¹⁰⁷ The western limit of the palace complex is the most ambiguous. It probably did not extend past the Via di Roma in the area of the "Palace of the Exarchs" and S. Apollinare Nuovo. However, on the basis of the documents already cited, it apparently did extend past the Via both to the north and south of this area, although how far is uncertain.

Specific parts of the palace related to the Great Palace which are known from the sources include: a circus, a main entrance gate, called the Chalke, an *excubitorium* or guardhouse, a palace church (S. Apollinare Nuovo), and a large public square, here called the Platea Maior.

The very layout of the complex with the relative positions of these components resembled that of the Great Palace (Fig. 10), as may be seen in a comparison of their schematic plans. As is well known, the layout of the palace at Constantinople is in itself problematic, but enough is known in general terms to allow some parallels to be drawn. Furthermore, Mango's study on the Chalke of the Great Palace facilitates some further comparisons.¹⁰⁸

In both cases the palace proper was situated in the easternmost part of the city near the sea. On

the west flank and connected to the palace in some fashion was the circus or hippodrome.¹⁰⁹ Although nothing visible remains of the circus at Ravenna, its relative position is known from several medieval sources and its memory is kept alive in the name of the present Via Cerchio. These suggest that it was aligned on a general east-west axis, located just to the south of the church of S. Agata between the Padenna and the Via di Roma.¹¹⁰

From the available sources it is known that the principal entrance into the palace complex in both cases faced west and was located near a palace chapel. These two structures fronted a large public square and will be discussed in more detail below. The similarity of the Ravenna palace with the Great Palace in both general layout and placement of these components is too strong to be mere coincidence. There are several additional and specific aspects of the palace at Ravenna that can be compared to the Constantinopolitan model.

Large peristyle courts preceding an apsed basilican hall have been excavated at both sites. In the Theoderican phase of the building found by Ghirardini, there are several rooms grouped on the south and north sides of a peristyle court (Fig.

see A. Tarlazzi, *Memorie sacre di Ravenna* (Ravenna, 1852), 171–76; C. Ricci, *Guida di Ravenna*, 2nd ed. (Bologna, 1897), 81.

¹⁰⁶ See above, note 72; and Testi-Rasponi, 115 note 6.

¹⁰⁷ The tricladium of the palace is referred to as the "tricladium ad mare"; Agnellus, c. 94, ed. Holder-Egger, 337; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 228. Both Ghirardini, "Gli scavi," col. 722 note 1, and Berti, *Regione ottava*, 24, believe that the triconch tricladium found in the excavations is that mentioned by Agnellus. This raises an important topographical question as the triconch is located at some distance from the city wall which at one time bordered the sea. There are three possibilities: (1) this is not the tricladium mentioned by Agnellus; (2) the walls were built later following a period when the shore may have been closer to the excavated palace; (3) the location of this tricladium was nevertheless close enough to the sea to be designated as it was. A document of 1098 discusses a tract of land bordered on one side by the "litus maris" and on the other by the "retro Palacio," indicating that the sea was indeed closer to the palace area even at this later date; see Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, I, 375. Also, this part of the city wall may well have been built after the time of Theoderic as claimed by Testi-Rasponi, 116–18 note 2. Given the inconclusive state of the evidence, the question of whether the triconch is the "tricladium ad mare" remains open.

¹⁰⁸ Mango, *Brazen House*. On the Chalke and its location, see also Guiland, *Études de topographie*, passim; R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine: Développement urbain et répertoire topographique*, 2nd ed., AOC 4A (Paris, 1964), 110–11; G. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, DOS 19 (Washington, D.C., 1984), 241–42. J. P. Richter, *Quellen zur byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte* (Vienna, 1897), 255–72, contains the literary sources but is outdated.

¹⁰⁹ Testi-Rasponi, 116–17 note 2. For the importance of the circus as part of the late antique palace, see A. Frazer, "The Iconography of the Emperor Maxentius' Buildings in Via Appia," *ArtB* 48 (1966), 385–92.

¹¹⁰ On the circus see Zirardini, *Edifici*, 191–94. It was apparently built by Valentinian III as a race held there is described by Sidonius, *Carmina*, XXIII, *ad Consentium*, lines 304–427, ed. and trans. W. B. Anderson, Loeb, I (Cambridge, Mass.-London, 1936), 302–13. The *Chronica de Civitate Ravennae*, ed. Muratori, 575, says that "explevit murum civitatis, quo usque caput circo et therma." Games are recorded as having been celebrated there in 519 in honor of Theoderic's son-in-law Eutharicus' appointment as consul; Cassiodorus, *Chronica*, a. 519, ed. Mommsen, 161. It is last mentioned ca. 640 in connection with the fate of the traitor Mauricius Chartularius: "Videns autem Isacius caput Mauricii, gavisus est et fecit eum ad exemplum multorum in circo Ravennate in stipitem poni"; *Liber Pontificalis*, c. 75, ed. L. Duchesne, 2nd ed., I (Paris, 1955), 332; repeated by Johannes Diaconus, *Chronicon episcoporum sanctae Neapolitanae ecclesiae*, RISS, I.2, 302. Later documents record the area of the circus: doc. of 960: "platea publica q. pergit ad circulum junta scetam Mariam q. voc. in cartulario"; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, I, 150–51; doc. of 982: "jacentibus sibique subjectis constit in territ. Civit. Rav. prope Sce. Agathe martiris q. v. majoris . . . ab alio lat. Ecclae. sce. Agathe majoris et andronallam que pergit ad plateam publicam seu a tercio lat. platea publica q. pergit ad portam Ursicini atque a quarto lat. alia platea que pergit ad circulum juxta scam Mariam q. v. in catulario"; Fantuzzi, I, 211; doc. of 1175: "et Ecclesiae Portuensi in qua voluit sepeliri totum tenimentum quod habebat in Circulo"; Fantuzzi, II, 274, no. 77; doc. of 1294: "Ecclesiam S. Marie in Pace, que est dicti Monasterii Classis pleno jure positam in Civitate Ravennae juxta Plateam majorem cum domibus et orto juxta eam positam, uno latere cujus Ecclesiae et domorum strate percurrrens, alio via que vadit ad Circulum"; Fantuzzi, IV, 376; doc. of 1321: "Guayta S. Agate Maioris in Circolo"; Federici, *Regesto*, 273, no. 450.

11).¹¹¹ While the southern side, probably two-storied as indicated by what appears to be the base of a stairway in room C, was probably a residential wing, the northern side contained rooms of a ceremonial function including the apsed basilican hall or *aula regia* (room L).¹¹² This hall was aligned with the central axis of the building and was entered through a triple arcade. Two rooms (T, U) opened off the *aula* near the apse.¹¹³ To the east is a triconch triclinium (S) which was apparently added to the existing structure in the Theoderic period.¹¹⁴ The relationship between the peristyle court and the apsed basilican hall finds a parallel in the structure excavated in the Great Palace.¹¹⁵ Here again the hall was entered through a triple arcade and had rooms opening off near the apse.

Not only is the architectural planning in these buildings similar, but some of the subjects that appear in the floor mosaics are also related.¹¹⁶ In

¹¹¹ The plan (Fig. 11) has been redrawn following Ghirardini's description of this phase of the structure. The western side of the peristyle, which was not excavated, has been drawn with dashed lines according to his estimates of the peristyle's limits. See Ghirardini, "Gli scavi," col. 741 note 1. The most problematic area of the excavated building is the courtyard, which was poorly reported by the excavator. The only thing which is clear from the report is that the octagonal fountain in the center is later than, and presumably replaced, a covered walkway which had linked the north and south sides of the peristyle. The relationship of the other constructions in the courtyard with each other and with the peristyle remains a mystery, though I suspect that most, with the exception of the statue base, are later additions.

¹¹² For this room and its place in palace architecture see G. De Angelis d'Ossat, "L'Aula Regia del distrutto palazzo imperiale di Ravenna," *Corsi Rav* 23 (1976), 345–56, rpr. in idem, *Realtà dell'architettura*, 461–70. On the type see L. Schneider, *Die Domäne als Weltbild: Wirkungsstrukturen der spätantiken Bildersprache* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 68–69, 204–29 notes 6–8; L. Luschi, "Basilicae centenariae tres," *Studi classici e orientali* 32 (1982), 157–78, who notes the similarity in size of this room to those of other imperial audience halls.

¹¹³ Ghirardini, "Gli scavi," col. 741, states that the walls were so completely destroyed that it was impossible to ascertain where all of the doors were located. There is, therefore, no way of knowing whether or not rooms M, N, O, and P also opened into the hall.

¹¹⁴ As evidenced by the dating of its single mosaic floor, for which see below. The configuration of this room and the *aula regia* are reminiscent of that of the villa, perhaps imperial, at Piazza Armerina. On this villa see A. Carandini, A. Ricci, and M. de Vos, *Filosofiana: La villa di Piazza Armerina. Immagine di un aristocratico romano al tempo di Costantino* (Palermo, 1982); R. J. A. Wilson, *Piazza Armerina* (Austin, 1983).

¹¹⁵ See esp. D. Talbot Rice, ed., *The Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors, Second Report* (Edinburgh, 1958). For its mosaics and dating see the following note.

¹¹⁶ The penultimate level of mosaics, which includes several figural scenes, is assigned to the period of Theoderic by Ghirardini, "Gli scavi," col. 821, a dating tentatively accepted by I. Lavin, "The Hunting Mosaics of Antioch and Their Sources," *DOP* 17 (1963), 179–286, esp. 260–62. In the first detailed study of the mosaics found in the excavations, Berti, *Regione*

both programs there are scenes of Bellerophon slaying the Chimera and personifications of the Seasons,¹¹⁷ subjects that are often associated with imperial iconography. The myth of Bellerophon has allegorical connotations of the victory of good over evil, with the hero being identified with the emperor or king.¹¹⁸ Another part of the decoration that places this building into a royal context is found in the inscription of the triclinium, framed and carried by two putti. The text invites the guests to partake of the fruits of each season from all over the world.¹¹⁹ It was considered one of the

ottava, 10–86, disagrees and assigns only the geometrical patterned upper-level mosaics found in the north wing of the portico and in rooms Q, R, S, and T, as well as the scitile floor of room L to the period of Theoderic. See also R. Farioli, "Note su alcuni mosaici pavimentali di Ravenna (Collezione Serena-Munghini)," *Corsi Rav* 20 (1970), 309–30; H. Stern, "Remarques sur les sujets figurés des mosaïques du palais dit de Théodoric à Ravenne," *FR* 121 (1978), 45–55 and "Sur un motif ornemental des mosaïques du palais dit du Théodoric à Ravenne," *ibid.*, 57–85. On the floor mosaics of the Great Palace see Talbot Rice, *Great Palace*, passim, and idem, "On the Date of the Mosaic Floor of the Great Palace at Constantinople," *Charisterion eis Anastasion K. Orlandon*, I (Athens, 1965), 1–5, where he dates them between 530 and the beginning of the 7th century; P. J. Nordhagen, "The Mosaics of the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors," *BZ* 56 (1963), 53–68, who identifies the structure as the Justinian built by Justinian II (685–695); A. Grabar, *Byzantium: From the Death of Theodosius to the Rise of Islam* (London, 1966), 102–5, who dates the mosaics on stylistic grounds from the mid 5th to the early 6th century, a dating also reached by F. D'Andria, "Note sui mosaici del Palazzo imperiale di Costantinopoli," *Contributi dell'Istituto di Archeologia*, 2, Pubblicazioni dell'Università cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Contributi, serie terza, scienze storiche, 11 (Milan, 1969), 99–109; and accepted by S. Hiller, "Divino sensu agnoscere: Zur Deutung des Mosaikbodens im Peristyl des Grossen Palastes zu Konstantinopel," *Kairos* 11 (1969), 275–305. E. Kitzinger, *Byzantine Art in the Making* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), 112, tentatively suggests a 7th-century dating. The question is still open, though the evidence leans in favor of a Justinianic date.

¹¹⁷ On the myth of Bellerophon in art see S. Hiller, *Bellerophon: Ein griechischer Mythos in der römischen Kunst* (Munich, 1970). For personifications of the Seasons see G. Hanfmann, *The Season Sarcophagus in Dumbarton Oaks*, 2 vols., DOS 2 (Cambridge, Mass., 1951).

¹¹⁸ See A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), 93–94. Hanfmann, *Sarcophagus*, I, 186, identifies the Bellerophon here with the emperor or king as does Hiller, *Bellerophon*, 85–89, who also infers some Christian theological significance. H. Brandenburg, "Bellerophon christianus? Zur Deutung des Mosaiks von Hinton St. Mary und zum Problem der Mythen-darstellung in der kaiserzeitlichen dekorativen Kunst," *RQ* 63 (1968), 49–86, on 62–63, says that the mosaic at Ravenna has no deep significance other than representing a "heroic ideal." J. Huskinson, "Some Pagan Mythological Figures and Their Significance in Early Christian Art," *BSR* 42 (1974), 68–97, accepts the interpretation of Hanfmann and Hiller. This myth was considered an appropriate subject for palace decoration even in the 10th century as seen in the imaginary palace described by Digenes Akrites, VII.42–156, ed. and trans. J. Mavrogordato (Oxford, 1956), 222, 223.

¹¹⁹ "Sume quod autumnus quod ver quod bruma quod aestas. Alternis reparant totoque creantur in orbe." See Ghirardini, "Gli scavi," col. 789; Berti, *Regione ottava*, 78–81.

privileges of the king to be able to dine on such foods, as is made clear in a letter of Cassiodorus: "A private person may eat only the produce of his own district, but it is the glory of a king to collect at his table the delicacies of all lands."¹²⁰

While the building at Constantinople is probably of a later date, the similarities in plan and decorative motifs suggest a common tradition, perhaps traceable to the Magnaura built by Constantine.¹²¹ This building, burned in the Nika Riot of 532 and then rebuilt, was a large apsed basilican hall. The sources describe rooms that opened off the apsed end of the hall, somewhat like pastophoria in a church. This is, of course, the arrangement of both the later Constantinopolitan hall and the *aula regia* at Ravenna.

Other aspects of the palace at Ravenna that echoed those of the Great Palace include the *excubitorium*, palace church dedicated to Christ, and main entrance (the Chalke).¹²² Nothing remains of the *excubitorium* at Ravenna, but medieval documents make reference to an area called "Scubito" located somewhere between S. Apollinare Nuovo and S. Giovanni Evangelista.¹²³ The *excubitores* were organized in Constantinople by Emperor Leo in 466,¹²⁴ so they may well have been imitated at Ravenna by Theoderic.

The palace church built by Theoderic near the Chalke had the same dedication as the palace chapel near the Chalke of the Great Palace. The Ravenna church has been known as S. Apollinare Nuovo since the tenth century, but originally it was dedicated to Christ, as we are informed by Agnellus.

¹²⁰ *Variae*, XII.4, ed. Mommsen, 362; ed. Fridh, 467; trans. Hodgkin, 490.

¹²¹ On the Magnaura see Janin, *Constantinople*, 117–18; R. Guillard, "Le Grand Palais sacré de Byzance: Le Palais de la Magnaure," *Επ.Ετ.Βυζ.Σπ.* 27 (1957), 63–74, rpr. in idem, *Études de topographie*, I, 141–50. For the sources see Richter, *Quellen*, 294–304.

¹²² The presence of an *excubitorium* and a Chalke at both Ravenna and Constantinople was noted by E. Dyggve, *Ravennatum Palatium Sacrum: La basilica ipetratale per cerimonie. Studi sull'architettura dei palazzi della tarda antichità* (Copenhagen, 1942), 45.

¹²³ Document of 11(27), 11(57), or 11(87): "in claustrum sce. Apolinaris Novi. Peto a te Nicholao abb. supradicti mon. uti mihi Danieli abbati mon. S. Iohannis Evangeliste petitori pro me et monasterio ortum unum constitutum in hac civitate Rave., in regione de Scubito: a primo l(ater) et secundo ego, a tercio et quarto tu"; Federici, *Regesto*, 58, no. 53. The "Scubito" is also mentioned in documents of 977, *ibid.*, 14–15, no. 3; 1154, Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, II, 296–97; 1162, *ibid.*, II, 137; and 1224, *ibid.*, II, 300, no. 28. A document of 1154 mentions an orchard "in loco d(icitur) Scubito in regione de Moneta"; Fantuzzi, VI, 248, presumably referring to the *Moneta Aurea* discussed above.

¹²⁴ See R. I. Frank, *Scholae Palatinae: The Palace Guards of the Later Roman Empire*, PAAR 23 (Rome, 1969), 204–5.

lus.¹²⁵ Deichmann is most likely correct in his suggestion that the model for this church was the ναὸς τοῦ κυρίου, the palace church built by Constantine.¹²⁶

As a palace church, the building displays nothing extraordinary architecturally. It is a simple three-aisle basilica, originally preceded by an atrium and terminating in a typical externally polygonal apse without pastophoria.¹²⁷ However, its status as a palace church was enhanced by its interior decoration. The nave walls were decorated with mosaics, as was probably the original apse. Of the present decoration, the christological scenes of the upper nave walls, the prophets and apostles between the clerestory windows, the Christ enthroned, the Madonna enthroned approached by the Magi, the "Classis" mosaic, and the "Palatium" mosaic are all remains of the original program.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Agnellus, c. 86, ed. Holder-Egger, 335; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 219: "In tribunali vero, si diligentur inquisieritis, super fenestras invenietis ex lapideis litteris exaratum ita: THEODERICUS REX HANC ECLESIAM A FUNDAMENTIS IN NOMINE DOMINI NOSTRI YHESU CHRISTI FECIT." The original dedication of the church has been called into question by G. Fiaccadori, "Sulla memoria teodericiana di S. Martino in Ciel d'Oro," *FR* 113–14 (1977), 163–79, who believes that the inscription was placed there by the Longobards and that the original dedication of the church is unknown. His principal argument is based on the report of Agnellus (ed. Holder-Egger, 335; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 221) that the apse had collapsed in an earthquake, presumably destroying any original inscriptions. However, Agnellus' statement can just as well be interpreted to mean that only the conch of the apse fell, leaving the inscription "super fenestras." On the later dedication to St. Apollinaris see F. Lanzoni, "Studi storico-liturgici su S. Apollinare Nuovo," *Studi e ricerche su S. Apollinare Nuovo*, FR, Suppl. 2 (Ravenna, 1916), 83–98.

¹²⁶ Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 128. On the church in Constantinople see R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, III. *Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), 511–12, who notes its location near the *excubitorium* and Chalke; C. Mango, *Brazen House*, 97. A later chapel dedicated to the Savior was built on the north side of the Chalke by Romanus I Lecapenus (919–944) and completely rebuilt by John Tzimiskes (964–976); see Mango, 149–69.

¹²⁷ There is no complete architectural study of the church, but Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 171–75 and *Kommentar*, I, 125–38, provides a good introduction. On the atrium, excavated in 1896, and on the original facade see G. Gerola, "La facciata di S. Apollinare Nuovo attraverso i secoli," *Studi e ricerche su S. Apollinare Nuovo*, 3–32. On the original apse, now reconstructed, and the later (9th-century) crypt see G. Tura, "A proposito dell'apside di S. Apollinare Nuovo," *NBACr* 24–25 (1925), 7–25; G. Bovini, "La cripta di Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna," *Arte del primo millennio: Atti del II Convegno per lo studio dell'arte dell'Alto medioevo . . . Pavia . . . 1950*, ed. E. Arslan (Torino, n.d.), 118–21, pls. xxxiv–xxxvii.

¹²⁸ See Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 175–99 and *Kommentar*, I, 139–89; von Simson, *Sacred Fortress*, 69–110; C. Ricci, *Tavole storiche dei mosaici di Ravenna*, IV. *Sant'Apollinare Nuovo* (Rome, 1934); C. O. Nordström, *Ravennastudien: Ideengeschichtliche und ikonographische Untersuchungen über die Mosaiken von Ravenna*, Figura, 4 (Stockholm, 1953), 55–87; L. Ottolenghi, "Stile e derivazioni iconografiche nei riquadri cristologici di Sant'Apollinare Nuovo," *Studi e ricerche su S. Apollinare Nuovo*, 101–12.

The mosaic fragment now displayed on the west wall of the church, which bears an effigy of a ruler with an inscription identifying him as Justinian, actually dates from the time of Theoderic and may be a portrait of him, though this is uncertain.¹²⁹ The quality of the workmanship and the iconography of some of the individual panels demonstrate the use of both Roman and Byzantine models and perhaps artisans.¹³⁰ Finally, the richness of its ceiling decoration was noted by Agnellus who states that because of this the church was called "Golden Heaven."¹³¹ G. Bovini has suggested that the ceiling was originally decorated with gilded beams, much like those seen in later medieval churches.¹³²

The most significant aspect of the program for this study is the juxtaposition of the Enthroned Christ and the Palatium of Theoderic at opposite ends of the south nave wall. Near the apse of the church, Christ is seated on a lyre-backed throne which was most likely inspired by that of the Byzantine emperor, flanked by an angelic entourage in what is obviously a vision of the Celestial Court.

nare Nuovo a Ravenna," *FR* 68 (1955), 5–42; G. Bovini, *Mosaici di Sant'Apollinare Nuovo di Ravenna: Il ciclo cristologico* (Florence, 1958); P. Angiolini Martinelli, "Aspetti della cultura figurativa paleobizantina nei mosaici di S. Apollinare Nuovo di Ravenna: Il ciclo cristologico," *Corsi Rav* 23 (1976), 7–20.

¹²⁹ See Ricci, *Tavole storiche*, 100–106; F. von Lorentz, "Theoderich—nicht Justinian," *RM* 50 (1935), 339–47; G. Bovini, "Note sul presunto ritratto musivo di Giustiniano in S. Apollinare Nuovo di Ravenna," *Annales Universitatis Saraviensis, Philosophie-Lettres* 5 (1956), 50–53, who suggests that it may represent Anastasius or Justin I.

¹³⁰ E. Tea, "I commitenti d'arte a Ravenna nel V e VI secolo," *Studi in onore di Aristide Calderini e Roberto Paribeni*, III (Milan, 1956), 747–51, notes the influence from Rome, as does von Simson, *Sacred Fortress*, 71–72, and S. Zanella, "I mosaici di Ravenna," *FR* 61 (1953), 5–52, on 18. For the Byzantine influences see Angiolini Martinelli, "Aspetti"; H. Stern, "Sur les influences byzantines dans les mosaïques ravennates du VIe siècle," *Settimane* 9 (1961 [1962]), 521–40; R. Farioli, *Ravenna romana e bizantina* (Ravenna, 1977), 104–9; P. J. Nordhagen, "The Penetration of Byzantine Mosaic Technique into Italy in the Sixth Century A.D.," *III Colloquio internazionale sul mosaico antico, Ravenna . . . 1980* (Ravenna, 1983), 73–84.

¹³¹ Agnellus, c. 86, ed. Holder-Egger, 335; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 218; trans. C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 107.

¹³² As in the Duomo of Monreale. G. Bovini, "Note sulla denominazione in *coelo aureo* della basilica di S. Apollinare Nuovo e sull'originaria copertura della chiesa," *FR* 80 (1959), 41–48. See also F. Deichmann, "Copertura delle basiliche paleocristiane," *FR* 75 (1957), 63–73 and "Untersuchungen zu Dach und Decke der Basilika," *Charites: Studien zur Altertumswissenschaft zu Ehren E. Langlotz* (Bonn, 1957), 249–64; rpr. in idem, *Rom, Ravenna*, 212–27. Gilded ceilings in the Great Palace are mentioned by Corippus, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris, libri IV*, III.20–21, ed. and trans. Av. Cameron (London, 1976), 61 (text), 102 (trans.).

At the other end of the wall, near the entrance, is a vision of the terrestrial court, represented by the palace of the ruler. This clear visual linking of the Heavenly Ruler and the earthly king can only allude to the latter's position as one who ruled, as did the emperor, by divine will.¹³³

As stated earlier, the main entrance into the palace complex, called the Chalke after the vestibule of the Great Palace, originally stood just to the south of this church. Although its remains have not been discovered, something about its location and decoration is known from the sources, especially Agnellus. In recounting his visit to the palace built by Theoderic at Pavia, Agnellus wrote that he saw an equestrian portrait of the king done in mosaic decorating the audience hall. "A similar one was in the palace he built here [in Ravenna] in the tribunal of the triclinium which is called Ad mare, [and another one was] over the door and above the gate that is called the Chalke of this city, where the main entrance to the palace was, in a place called Sicreston, where the church of the Savior is seen. On the gable of this building was the image of Theoderic in mosaic holding a lance in his right hand and a shield in his left, clad in war gear. Next to his shield stood Roma, depicted in mosaic, carrying a lance and a helmet. Next to the lance stood Ravenna, depicted in mosaic, her right foot over the sea, her left foot over the earth hastening toward the king."¹³⁴ The church of the Savior mentioned here has been identified with the "Palace of the Exarchs" and is called in a later document S.

¹³³ The idea that Theoderic ruled by divine will is frequently expressed in the writings of the period. See, e.g., Ennodius, *Vita s. Epifani*, c. 109, ed. and trans. G. Cook, *The Life of Saint Epiphanius by Ennodius* (Washington, D.C., 1942), 76, 77; Cassiodorus, *Variae*, ed. Mommsen, index, 542, s.vv. "favente," "deo." On the mosaic of Christ see Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 146–49; G. Steigerwald, "Christus als Pantokrator in der untersten Zone der Langhausmosaiken von S. Apollinare Nuovo zu Ravenna," *Tortulae: Studien zu altchristlichen und byzantinischen Monumenten*, RQ, Suppl. 30 (Freiburg, 1966), 272–84; J. Breckenridge, "Christ on the Lyre-Backed Throne," *DOP* 34–35 (1980–81), 247–60. R. Sörries, *Die Bilder der Orthodoxen im Kampf gegen den Arianismus*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, ser. 23, vol. 186 (Frankfurt, 1983), 280–82, argues on iconographic grounds that the panel with Christ was added by the Orthodox after 540. The technical evidence, however, clearly shows that it belongs to the Theoderican program.

¹³⁴ Agnellus, c. 94, ed. Holder-Egger, 337–38; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 227–30. The passage clearly describes two separate images of Theoderic at Ravenna: the king as an equestrian figure in the triclinium *Ad mare* and, above the entrance into the palace (the Chalke), standing between personifications of Rome and Ravenna. See H. L. Gonin, *Excerpta Agnelliana: The Ravennate Liber Pontificalis as a Source for the History of Art* (Utrecht, 1933), 99; C. Nauerth, *Agnellus von Ravenna*, MünchBeitr 15 (Munich, 1974), 99–101.

Salvatore ad Calchi.¹³⁵ During the bishopric of Theodore (679–693), a monastery dedicated to Theodore the Deacon was built “not far from the place called Calchi, next to the church of the blessed Martin the Confessor [i.e., S. Apollinare Nuovo].”¹³⁶ The sources leave no doubt that the Chalke of Ravenna stood just to the south of the palace church of S. Apollinare Nuovo.¹³⁷

The iconography of this mosaic—the king flanked by personifications of the two most important cities of his kingdom—is derived from imperial representations which often depicted the emperor in such a way.¹³⁸ Also significant is the fact that by having such an image placed over the entrance into his palace Theoderic was copying a practice used by Constantine who, according to Eusebius, had full-length portraits of himself “placed over the entrance gates of the palaces of some cities,” including Constantinople.¹³⁹

The Chalke and the palace church fronted a large public square called the Platea Maior, a name later used to denote the street that corresponds to the modern Via di Roma. Its exact dimensions are unknown, but the square may have extended north to the Moneta Aurea and southward past the present Via Alberoni. That the Platea Maior did not extend in the form of a street as far south as the city wall, as argued by some scholars, is clear from Agnellus’ statement that in his day there were ruins of the Palace in Laureto on both sides of the street, suggesting that the extension of

the street took place after the destruction of the palace.¹⁴⁰

In its location and function the square at Ravenna recalls the Augustaion, a square in front of the Great Palace.¹⁴¹ The Augustaion is known to have had an equestrian statue of Emperor Theodosius I or II, the horse of which may have been reused by Justinian for his own equestrian statue.¹⁴² It is possible that the equestrian statue of Theoderic mentioned by Agnellus and removed by Charlemagne occupied a similar place in Ravenna.¹⁴³ At least one scholar has stated that the

¹⁴⁰“Et ipsa domus regio multo tempore Valentinianus comoratus est et hinc atque inde ex utraque parte platee civitatis magnis decoravit”; Agnellus, c. 40, ed. Holder-Egger, 304–5; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 115 and notes 6–7. Felletti Maj, “Una carta di Ravenna,” 100; Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 40; and G. Mansuetti, “Geografia e storia di Ravenna antica,” *CorsiRav* 14 (1967), 157–90, on 187, argue that the Platea Maior was a street corresponding to the modern Via di Roma. M. Mazzotti, *Ravenna e il suo sviluppo urbano* (Ravenna, 1956), 15, says that it was a square in front of the palace at the time of Theoderic. One other reason to doubt that the Platea Maior originally extended to the Porta S. Laurentii is that when Abbot Johannes went from Cesarea to the palace he did not enter the city by way of the Porta S. Laurentii but rather used the Porta Wandalaria to the east (see above, note 90).

¹⁴¹See Guillard, “L’Augoustéon,” *Etudes de topographie*, II, 40–54; Mango, *Brazen House*, 42–47; Janin, *Constantinople*, 59–62; F. Dirimtekin, “The Augusteum,” *Ayasofya Müzesi, Yıllığı* 8 (1969), 24–26.

¹⁴²See Dirimtekin, “Augusteum,” 25; P. W. Lehmann, “Theodosius or Justinian? A Renaissance Drawing of a Byzantine Rider,” *ArtB* 41 (1959), 39–57, 356–58; and C. Mango, “Letter to the Editor,” *ibid.*, 351–56, who argues against Lehmann’s thesis that there was not an earlier statue of Theodosius.

¹⁴³Agnellus, c. 94, ed. Holder-Egger, 338; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 229–30: “In aspectu ipsorum pyramis tetragonis lapidibus et bisalis in altitudinem quasi cubiti sex; desuper autem equus ex ere, auro fulvo perfusus, ascensorque eius Theodoricus rex, scutum sinistro gerebat humero, dextro vero brachio lanuceam tenens.” On the statue and its later history in Aachen see H. Hoffmann, “Die Aachener Theoderichstatue,” *Das erste Jahrtausend: Kultur und Kunst im werdenden Abendland an Rhein und Ruhr*, ed. V. Elbern, I (Düsseldorf, 1962), 318–31, with earlier bibliography; H. Homeyer, “W. Strabos Gedicht über das Aachener Theoderich-Denkmal,” *SM*, 3rd ser. 12 (1971), 899–913; idem, “Walafrids Gedicht über das Theoderich-Denkmal in Aachen,” *Platonismus und Christentum: Festschrift für Heinrich Dörrie*, ed. H. P. Blume and F. Mann, *JbAC*, Suppl. 10 (Münster, 1983), 106–17; F. Thürlemann, “Die Bedeutung der Aachener Theoderich-statue für Karl den Grossen (801) und bei Walafrid Strabo (829): Materialien zu einer Semiotik visueller Objekte im frühen Mittelalter,” *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 59 (1977), 24–65. R. H. W. Stichel, *Die römische Kaiserstatue am Ausgang der Antike*, *Archaeologica* 24 (Rome, 1982), 102–3, believes that it represented Zeno, not Theoderic. His argument that all images of Theoderic were destroyed after 540 is erroneous; see Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity*, 165. On the importance of the statue as an imperial prerogative, note that Justinian forbade Theodahad to erect a statue to himself unless it was placed next to one of the emperor; Procopius, *De Bello gothico*, I.6.5, ed. and trans. Dewing, III, 50, 51. Other known portraits of Theoderic include the statue mentioned by Isidorus at Rome (above, note 46) and the mosaic in the palace at Pavia (above,

¹³⁵On the identification of the “Palace of the Exarchs” as the church of S. Salvatore see above, note 87. The subtitle is added in a document of 1161: “Ec. S. Salvatoris maioris q.v. ad Calcem”; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, II, 297, no. 12.

¹³⁶Agnellus, c. 119, ed. Holder-Egger, 356; trans. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 131. A document of 1262 refers to the monastery as “Monasterium S. Theodori altero, qui vocatur Calchi”; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, II, 216.

¹³⁷Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 43; G. Savini, *Per i monumenti e per la storia di Ravenna* (Ravenna, 1914), 73. Savini, 75, reports the finding of a plaza in the area south of the church between the Via di Roma and the building excavated by Ghirardini, therefore apparently between the Chalke and the palace.

¹³⁸Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio*, IV.80, ed. and trans. J. Bernardi, *Grégoire de Nazianze: Discours 4–5 contre Julien*, SC 309 (Paris, 1983), 204–5: “Different emperors delight in accompanying these portraits with other representations; some, the chief cities of their dominions offering them gifts; others, Victories holding garlands over their heads.” In general see Grabar, *L’empereur*, index, s.v. “personnifications toponymiques”; McCormack, *Art*, 29–30; K. Shelton, “Imperial Tyches,” *Gesta* 18 (1979), 27–38, with references to earlier literature.

¹³⁹Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, IV.15, ed. I. A. Heikel, *Eusebius Werke*, I, GCS 7 (Leipzig, 1902), 123; PG 20, col. 1164. The image over the Chalke of the Great Palace will be discussed in more detail below.

statue stood in the center of the Platea Maior, but in fact its original location is not certain.¹⁴⁴ There are, however, enough analogies to believe that the statue occupied a place in an open square fronting the palace. The first example is the already mentioned statue of Theodosius in the Augustaion. Second, according to Jordanes, Emperor Zeno erected an equestrian statue in honor of Theoderic "in front of the palace" at Constantinople.¹⁴⁵ Finally, when Charlemagne had the statue taken to Aachen, it was placed in an open area in front of the palace there.¹⁴⁶ Given these examples, the location of the equestrian statue of Theoderic in the square in front of the palace seems highly plausible.

The remaining evidence about the Palace of Theoderic is found in an extraordinary visual document, the "Palatium" mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo (Fig. 8). The mosaic depicts a building that is divided into a central triple-arcaded porch or *fastigium* and two wings consisting of porticoes and galleries which flank it on either side. Opened curtains are hung beneath each of the arches, while the spandrels contain winged Victories holding garlands and wreaths.¹⁴⁷ In the pediment of the

fastigium is an inscription that identifies the building as the "PALATIUM," while another inscription on the city gate that abuts the palace to the right reads "CIVITAS RAVENN(A)." There are several buildings in the background which are probably best identified as the churches built by Theoderic in Ravenna: the palace church with its now lost baptistery, the Arian Cathedral with its baptistery, and S. Andrea dei Goti.¹⁴⁸ That is, the city of Ravenna is represented in an abbreviated fashion as if it were a creation of Theoderic. Originally, the mosaic contained standing figures between the columns, as evidenced by parts of arms and hands still visible on some of the columns. These probably represented members of the royal family and court officials and were apparently removed, together with the mosaics of the lower zone of the nave walls, when the church was reconsecrated under Orthodox auspices following the fall of the city to the Byzantine army (Fig. 12).¹⁴⁹

That the mosaic represents an actual part of the palace complex appears certain. Its details agree with what is known about the palace from literary sources.¹⁵⁰ First, the mosaic shows the porticoes mentioned in the sources cited above. Second, a panegyric written for Queen Amalasuntha by Cassiodorus contains this passage about the palace: "Lo! a glittering house! the type that rich India admires, gem-adorned Persia visits often and noble Spain stands agape at; where we gaze upon rose-colored virgins resting on reddish wings—it is fitting that such stately maidens be statues of Victoria."¹⁵¹ The "rose-colored virgins" who are "statues of Victoria" apparently are the victories seen in the

note 58). Procopius, *ibid.*, I.24.22–27, ed. and trans. Dewing, III, 23–35, discusses a full-length mosaic portrait in the marketplace of Naples and *ibid.*, III.20.29, ed. and trans. Dewing, IV, 332, 333, other statues of Theoderic at Rome.

¹⁴⁴ See C. Ricci, *La Porta del Palazzo e la Torre Alidosia in Ravenna* (Ravenna, 1885), 23. Zirardini, *Edifici*, 110, says that it was located "in front of the palace" as does Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 41. Homeyer, "Walafrids Gedicht," 107, says "at the Mausoleum" (!). Hoffmann, "Die Aachener Theoderichstatue," 322, says that it was on the Pons Austri (or Augusti) on the Flumen Padennae, based on a chronicle written in the early 14th century, for which see G. Bugati, *Memorie storico-critiche intorno le reliquie ed il culto di S. Celso Martire* (Milan, 1782), 133–34. However, like all bridges on the Padennae, the Pons Austri was so small (4–5 m long) that a statue whose pyramidal base was ca. 3 m high would have overwhelmed it. For the bridge see Bovini, "Origini di Ravenna," 58–60. Furthermore, the chronicler has probably confused the statue of Theoderic with another equestrian statue which was taken to Pavia and was there known as the "Regisole." See G. Bovini, "Il Regisole: Un monumento equestre ravennate trasportato a Pavia nell'alto medio evo," *Corsi Rav* 10 (1963), 51–66, esp. 52 f.

¹⁴⁵ Jordanes, *Getica*, c. 289, ed. Mommsen, 132; trans. Mierow, 135.

¹⁴⁶ Hoffmann, "Die Aachener Theoderichstatue," 319; L. Falkenstein, *Der "Lateran" der karolingischen Pfalz zu Aachen*, Kölner historische Abhandlungen 13 (Cologne, 1966), 63 ff.

¹⁴⁷ A similar decoration is described in the Great Palace by Corripus, *In laudem Iustini*, III.205, trans. Cameron, 106: "Hangings covered the doors"; IV.206, trans. Cameron, 114: "Meanwhile the people had filled the entire palace which was decorated with twisted garlands of different leaves. Silk curtains hung all over the columns." For the significance of curtains in art of this period but with little reference to the present mosaic, see J. K. Eberlein, *Apparitus regis—revelatio veritatis: Studien zur*

Darstellung des Vorhangs in der bildenden Kunst von der Spätantike bis zum Ende des Mittelalters (Wiesbaden, 1982). The Victories with garlands in the spandrels are borrowed from imperial representations. See Gregory of Nazianzus, above, note 138.

¹⁴⁸ As argued by Testi-Rasponi, 220 note 2.

¹⁴⁹ The reconsecration of the Arian churches is mentioned by Agnellus, c. 85, ed. Holder-Egger, 334; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 215–17. Justinian's document of donation of the Arian churches to the Orthodox church survives; Marini, *Papiri*, 134–35, no. LXXVII. On the changes in the mosaics which included the cancellation of figures in front of the wall of the Classis mosaic, the removal of figures in the lower zone of the nave walls (which were replaced by the processions of Martyrs and Virgins) and of a figure, perhaps the Tyche of the city, in the city gate next to the "Palatium," see G. Bovini, "Antichi rifacimenti nei mosaici di S. Apollinare Nuovo di Ravenna," *Corsi Rav* 13 (1966), 51–81. The figure in the city gate was identified as the Tyche by Ricci, *Tavole storiche*, 52–53 and Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 145.

¹⁵⁰ G. Bovini, "Osservazioni sul frontone del 'Palatium' di Teodorico figurato nel mosaico di S. Apollinare Nuovo di Ravenna," *Festschrift für Rudolf Egger: Beiträge zur älteren europäischen Kulturgeschichte*, I (Klagenfurt, 1952), 206–11.

¹⁵¹ *Orationum reliquiae*, ed. Traube, 481.

spandrels of the building. Third, Agnellus' description of the mosaic portraits of Theoderic gives the location of one of them as being in the pediment of one of the palace buildings.¹⁵² A technical analysis of the mortar under the mosaic showed that the central area of the pediment had been reworked during the same period that the figures below had been removed.¹⁵³ This suggests that the mosaic originally depicted the image described by Agnellus, that is, an effigy of Theoderic which the Orthodox clergy later deemed unsuited for the decoration of the church. One may conclude on the basis of this evidence that the mosaic portrays part of the actual palace in some, if not all, of its details.

Although most scholars accept the mosaic as documenting the original appearance of the palace, the question of how to read it has been the subject of much debate.¹⁵⁴ There are basically two interpretations: that it represents some kind of interior or the porticoed facade of a building. The first was espoused by several scholars but was made best known by Dyggve in his important study on late antique palace architecture.¹⁵⁵ He believed that the mosaic depicted three sides of a ceremonial courtyard which have been flattened out for representational purposes. He noted that such flattening had been previously used in imperial art, citing, among other works, the Liberalitas panel from the Arch of Constantine in which people who are understood to be standing in front of the emperor are shown flanking him on both sides. More important are the parallels drawn between this interpretation and the so-called peristyle of the Palace of Diocletian at Split (Fig. 13), which are readily evident in Dyggve's reconstruction drawing (Fig. 14). Split does present a viable source for the courtyard that he saw represented in the mosaic, but there are some important differences which should not be overlooked. The building of the mosaic would have side aisles and shuttered galleries, and the Split "peristyle" does not. Another major difficulty is Dyggve's suggestion

that the so-called "Palace of the Exarchs" was also a "ceremonial palace building" which had a similar arrangement of an open courtyard leading to a throne room, itself modeled on the earlier courtyard shown in the mosaic. His interpretation of this building cannot be accepted as valid since it is itself a very problematic structure whose date, function, and plan have never been satisfactorily established.¹⁵⁶

A variation on this interpretation, which attempted to deal with the inconsistencies of Dyggve's thesis, was proposed by N. Duval.¹⁵⁷ He interprets the building of the mosaic not as a courtyard but as a basilican throne room which here has been flattened out and which combines parts of both the interior and exterior. In this version the triple arch of the center is seen as representing the triumphal arch "in the back part of the building," that is, between the "nave" and apse,¹⁵⁸ separated from the exterior representation of the pediment above by the band containing the inscription. Similarly, the wings are to be divided with the arcades belonging to the interior, the galleries and roofs to the exterior. So, in this rather complicated and confusing interpretation, the mosaic represents the pediment of the facade and its roof with the clerestory windows and roof of the basilica space behind it folded out to either side. Below this view of the upper zone of the exterior is shown the very back part of the ground level of the interior with the arcades that approach it

¹⁵⁶For the proposed dating and functions see above, notes 85–87. The published plans of the building are inaccurate because it has never been completely excavated. The parts that are known and that have been drawn together in plans as narthex, nave, and apse are actually at different levels and probably do not belong to the same building. See M. Mazzotti, "La seconda fase degli scavi al c.d. palazzo di Teodorico," *CorsiRav* (1957), pt. 1, 63–66.

¹⁵⁷N. Duval, "La représentation du Palais dans l'art du Bas-Empire et haut Moyen Age d'après le Psautier d'Utrecht," *CahArch* 15 (1965), 207–54 and reiterated in his "La mosaïque du 'Palatium' de S. Apollinaire-le-neuf représente-t-elle une façade ou un édifice aplani?" *CorsiRav* 25 (1978), 93–122.

¹⁵⁸Duval does not explain why the triple arcade would be in the back part of a throne room. Almost all known triple arcades connected with basilican throne rooms—at the complex of Maxentius on the Via Appia, the hall of the Great Palace, the villa at Piazza Armerina, and the large hall excavated by Ghirardini at Ravenna—are at the entrance into the hall and not somewhere "in the back part." There is one basilican hall with such an arcade which has been excavated in the palace of Galerius at Thessaloniki; see N. C. Moutsopoulos, "Contribution à l'étude du plan de la ville de Thessalonique à l'époque romane," *Atti del XVI Congresso di storia dell'architettura, Atene . . . 1969* (Rome, 1977), 187–263, esp. 236. However, given the incomplete nature of the excavations of this palace, it is not known if this hall served as a throne room. For a comparison of the plans of these halls see Luschi, above, note 112.

¹⁵²"In pinaculum ipsius loci fuit Theodorici effigies"; Agnellus, c. 94. The significance of this passage in identifying the building of the mosaic will be discussed below.

¹⁵³Bovini, "Osservazioni," 211; Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity*, 163.

¹⁵⁴For a summary of the arguments to ca. 1975 see Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 141 ff.

¹⁵⁵A. Haupt, *Die älteste Kunst, insbesondere die Baukunst der Germanen* (Leipzig, 1909), 150; J. Ebersolt, *Le Grand Palais de Constantinople* (Paris, 1910), 165–66; F. Benoit, *L'architecture: L'occident médiéval* (Paris, 1933), 54; Dyggve, *Ravennatum Palatium Sacrum*, passim.

folded out on either side. This type of multiview representation is perhaps best noted in the Mater Ecclesia mosaic from Tabarka (Fig. 15).¹⁵⁹ An important difference is that while this image combines parts of the interior and the exterior of a church, it is definitely a side view and not a view directly into the structure from front to back like the "Palatium" mosaic.

Most of those who have believed the mosaic to be either a "glorification" courtyard or the throne room have also believed that the mosaic originally contained a depiction of Theoderic in the central portal along with the other standing figures. This assumption was based on what were believed to be analogous scenes such as the aforementioned panel from the Arch of Constantine or some of the drawings found in the Utrecht Psalter (Fig. 16), which always show the ruler in the central space.¹⁶⁰ However, even though it is well documented that figures were originally standing between the columns of the wings, no change was ever made to the central portal. That Theoderic was never depicted in this central position considerably weakens these analogies.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹On this type of depiction see P. Lampl, "Schemes of Architectural Representations in Early Medieval Art," *Marsyas* 9 (1961), 6–13. On the Tabarka mosaic see Duval, "Représentation," 244–47; P. Gauckler, "Mosaïques tombales d'une chapelle de martyrs à Thabraca," *Mon Piot* 13 (1906), 175–227, esp. 188–97 and pl. xviii. For a graphic reconstruction of the church shown in the mosaic see J. B. Ward-Perkins and R. Goodchild, *The Christian Antiquities of Tripolitania* (Oxford, 1953), 57–58.

¹⁶⁰See Duval, "Représentation," and S. Dufrenne, *Les illustrations du Psautier d'Utrecht: Sources et apport carolingien*, Association des publications près les Universités de Strasbourg, 161 (Paris, n.d.), 187–92, who believes that the illustrations are derived from a 4th- or 5th-century source.

¹⁶¹Since the entrance into the palace was depicted with curtains drawn to reveal a golden interior, some speculation as to its significance may be made. MacCormack, *Art*, 238, suggests that what is represented is the "empty palace" awaiting the advent of the ruler, much in the fashion of the "empty" or "prepared" throne common in art of the period. Another interpretation is that the mosaic may have the opposite meaning. That is, the gold background may be seen as representing light and, in turn, the presence of the ruler. In this context, note how when Justin II is in the palace, Corippus exclaims that "light fills the palace" (I.360; trans. Cameron, 94). This comment concludes a passage in which the emperor is compared to the sun (I.339 ff). Earlier Eusebius, *De laudibus Constantini*, III.4, ed. Heikel, *Eusebius Werke*, I.7, 201; PG 20, col. 1329; trans. H. A. Drake, *In Praise of Constantine: A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations*, University of California Publications, Classical Studies 15 (Berkeley, 1976), 87, compared the subject of his panegyric to light. In general see O. Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung in höfischen Zeremoniell vom oströmischen Staats- und Reichsgedanken*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt, 1956), 112–30; F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy: Origins and Background*, DOS 9 (Washington, D.C., 1966), 620–21, 798; E. Kantorowicz, "'Ortiens Augusti'—Lever du Roi," *DOP* 17 (1963), 117–77.

The other standard interpretation of the mosaic, that it represents a facade of the palace, is based on several factors.¹⁶² It may be argued that the artist did not flatten everything and did know how to show depth. The treatment of the city gate shows that he was capable of rendering the thickness of a wall. In the churches of the background, transitions from narthex to nave and nave to apse are marked by shadows. Turning specifically to the palace building, the roofs of the side wings are lower than the center and join it behind the pediment and not in front, as they would if it were a flattened-out representation. Also, the lines of the roof tiles of the wings are not vertical, as they would be if flattened, but are shown in correct perspective slanting inward toward the center where the roof tiles are vertical. Finally, the galleries or windows are closed and shuttered and, therefore, are not posts of observation for dignified court ceremonies below but simple windows protected from the elements.

In a somewhat polemic study on the subject, G. De Francovich came out strongly against the theory of Dyggve and any interpretation of the building of the mosaic as a dissected basilica.¹⁶³ He discussed several early medieval illustrations of buildings and concluded that when reproducing actually existing buildings medieval artists "abandoned arbitrary architectural representations and used more precise structural elements which permit the identification of the reproduced building."¹⁶⁴ Since the mosaic represents what was then an existing building, it must be accepted for what it appears to be, a facade and not a courtyard or a basilica.

The arguments in favor of a facade interpretation of the mosaic are, in my opinion, more convincing than those that see it as some kind of an interior feature. It is to be seen as the somewhat abbreviated view of one of the facades of the palace consisting of a tetrapylon porch, the *fastigium*, which projects from a two-story arcaded facade.

¹⁶²Outlined by N. Duval, "Que savons-nous du Palais de Théodoric à Ravenne?" *Mélanges* 72 (1960), 337–71. This is the traditional interpretation espoused by several scholars such as Ricci, *Tavole storiche*, 43–44; K. M. Swoboda, *Römische und romanische Paläste: Eine architekturgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, 3rd ed. (Vienna, 1969), 256–59; Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 44 and *Kommentar*, I, 142–43; and C. Frugoni, "Ancora una proposta per i mosaici di S. Apollinare Nuovo," *Corsi Rav* 30 (1983), 285–88.

¹⁶³G. De Francovich, *Il Palatium di Teodorico a Ravenna e la cosiddetta "architettura" di potenza*, Quaderni di Commentari 1 (Rome, 1970).

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 57.

Such a facade would be similar to the building shown in the Trier Ivory, which almost certainly represents one of the buildings of the Great Palace.¹⁶⁵

As early as 1891 the building of the mosaic was identified as the Chalke of Ravenna.¹⁶⁶ Somewhat later H. Thiersch wrote that the building of the mosaic was a copy of the Chalke of the Great Palace, as was the Great Mosque at Damascus built between 707 and 714 (Fig. 17).¹⁶⁷ K. A. C. Creswell also noted what he called the "striking resemblance" between the Great Mosque and the "Palatium" mosaic.¹⁶⁸ The similarity between the two buildings was further emphasized by De Francovich who uses it as the basis for identifying the building of the mosaic as the Ravenna Chalke. The similarity can be explained if it is assumed that the common source was the Chalke of the Great Palace, which is impossible to prove. That there were connections between Damascus and Constantinople is known: the mosaics of the Great Mosque were set by Byzantine workers, and there are some Byzantine elements in its architecture, such as the use of impost blocks.¹⁶⁹

There is, however, a problem with these attempts to link the Great Mosque with the "Palatium" by way of the Chalke at Constantinople: the Chalke that would have been copied at Damascus would have been that built by Justinian following the Nika Riot and not the earlier Chalke built by Constantine or one of his successors which would have been seen by Theoderic during his stay in Constantinople.¹⁷⁰ It is possible, though, that the

later vestibule essentially copied the earlier one, in which case this theory would still be viable. Yet another visual link between the two Chalkes may possibly be seen in a schematic representation on the Column of Arcadius in Constantinople which depicts a tetrapylon similar to the central section of the building in the mosaic (Fig. 18). Based on its location and context in the program, it has been identified as the Chalke built by Constantine.¹⁷¹

There are other reasons to believe that the "Palatium" mosaic represents the Chalke of Ravenna. First, it is generally believed that the whole mosaic program in the church originally depicted a procession of Theoderic and his court from the palace to the church.¹⁷² If so, the logical point of departure from the palace would be the Chalke. More important, it seems reasonable that the main entrance would be the most representative part of the whole complex if only part of it could be depicted, as was the case here. Significantly, the importance of a particular part of the palace as representing the whole is noted by Cassiodorus: "These are our pleasures, the beautiful images of the power of the empire, honorable testimony of royal sovereignty; these things are shown to ambassadors who are impressed and astonished, and from the facade which is seen first, the master is believed to be what is attested by his dwelling place."¹⁷³ The facade that is seen first is the principal facade which contained the main entry. A remarkably similar comment was made by Procopius in his description of the new Chalke built by Justinian: "We know the lion by his claw as the proverb has it; so also will my readers know the impressiveness of the Palace from its vestibule."¹⁷⁴ In the minds of these sixth-century writers, the principal facade and entrance were representative of the whole palace.

it is not known whether or not the original Chalke had a dome; Duval is referring to the later, Justinianic, Chalke.

¹⁷¹ See G. Becatti, *La colonna coclide istoriata: Problemi storici iconografici stilistici*, Studi e materiali del Museo dell'Impero Romano 6 (Rome, 1960), 198; for the drawing, E. Freshfield, "Notes on a Vellum Album Containing Some Original Sketches of Public Buildings and Monuments, Drawn by a German Artist Who Visited Constantinople in 1574," *Archaeologia* 72 (1922), 87–104, esp. 97 and pl. xix.

¹⁷² Lanzoni, "Studi liturgici," 93; Ricci, *Tavole storiche*, 66–67; von Simson, *Sacred Fortress*, 82; Bovini, "Antichi rifacimenti," 54; Steigerwald, "Christus als Pantokrator," 283–84; F. Gerke, "Nuove indagini sulla decorazione musiva della chiesa ravenate di S. Apollinare Nuovo," *FR* 103–4 (1972), 113–209, on 146; Frugoni, "I mosaici," 286.

¹⁷³ *Variae*, VII.5, ed. Mommsen, 204; ed. Fridh, 264; trans. Houghton, "Theodoric," 5.

¹⁷⁴ *De aedificiis*, I.10.11, ed. and trans. Dewing, VII, 84, 85.

¹⁶⁵ See K. Holum and G. Vikan, "The Trier Ivory, Adventus Ceremonial, and the Relics of St. Stephen," *DOP* 33 (1979), 113–33, with references to the earlier literature.

¹⁶⁶ Von Reber, "Der karolingische Palastbau," 795–96. Ghirardini, "Gli scavi," col. 836, and G. Bovini, *Edifici di culto di età teodericiana e giustiniana a Ravenna* (Bologna, 1970), 139, suggest that it represents the north side of the excavated palace quadripartito. This has been accepted by Berti, *Regione ottava*, 13 note 4.

¹⁶⁷ H. Thiersch, *Pharos: Antike Islam und Occident. Ein Beitrag zur Architekturgeschichte* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1909), 211–16. On the Great Mosque of Damascus see K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1969), 151–210.

¹⁶⁸ Creswell, op. cit., 197–98; idem, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture* (Harmondsworth, 1958), 73–74.

¹⁶⁹ See H. A. R. Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate," *DOP* 12 (1958), 224–30. For the mosaics see Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 323–72, with bibliography.

¹⁷⁰ On the chronology of the Chalke at Constantinople see Mango, *Brazen House*, 25–35. The confusion about the Chalkes is continued by Duval in his refutation of De Francovich's study; see "La mosaïque du 'Palatium'," 96, where he says that the building of the "Palatium" mosaic could not be a copy of the Chalke at Constantinople since that Chalke had a dome. In fact,

Another bit of evidence is found in Agnellus' description of the two mosaic portraits of Theoderic discussed above. The location of one of these was given as being "over the door and above the gate that is called the Chalke of this city, where the main entrance to the palace was."¹⁷⁵ As previously mentioned, a technical analysis of the "Palatium" mosaic has shown that the pediment depicted was altered, and it is generally assumed that the original mosaic contained one of the depictions of Theoderic reported by Agnellus. The location of the other mosaic is given as the "tribunal of the triclinium." The word "tribunal" as used by the ninth-century writer refers to the apse of a building which in this case would be the "apse of the triclinium."¹⁷⁶ Since the mosaic does not depict an apse, then it must be the Chalke.

A final feature of the mosaic which supports such an identification is the lunette of the city gate to the right of the palace (Fig. 19). It contains three figures dressed in white. The central figure holds a cross and is trampling a serpent below his feet. Interpretations of this enigmatic scene have varied, though usually it has been explained as either St. Apollinaris or Christ in the company of two disciples.¹⁷⁷ However, the church was not originally dedicated to St. Apollinaris, and Christ is always dressed in purple in other Ravenna mosaics. A third interpretation, which has not been given much currency, identifies the group as Constantine and two of his sons.¹⁷⁸ It is reported that he "exhibited [his Christianity] for everyone to see upon a panel placed high aloft at the vestibule of the imperial palace, having represented in the painting the salutary symbol above his head, while the

enemy, that hostile beast which laid siege to God's church by usurpation of the godless ones, was in the shape of a dragon, falling into the abyss. Indeed, the books of God's prophets proclaimed him to be a dragon and a crooked serpent. Wherefore the Emperor, by means of a waxen painting, was showing everyone, underneath his own feet and those of his sons, the dragon pierced by a dart in the middle of his body and cast down into the depths of the sea."¹⁷⁹ The essential elements of this painting are matched in the scene of the mosaic, with the white clothing of the three figures explained by the fact that the three were by this time deceased. Such a depiction at Ravenna can be taken as a direct allusion to that of the Great Palace and its main entrance.

There are, therefore, several reasons for believing the building of the "Palatium" mosaic to be the Chalke of the palace. Although this identification is not certain, it best explains the mosaic which remains as visual evidence of the "facade that is seen first" and as testament to the greatness of its patron.

V

One of the most significant of Theoderic's buildings, and indeed of the whole late antique period, is his mausoleum located to the northeast of the city, a short distance from the city wall (Fig. 20).¹⁸⁰ This massive stone structure has two stories with the lower level being articulated on the exterior by niches, while the upper, apparently never completed, is smaller in diameter and therefore set back. The monument is topped by an enormous single stone, cut in the form of a dome. In plan the lower level is decagonal with exterior niches on each side except the side containing the entry (Fig. 21). The interior of this level does not correspond

¹⁷⁵ Agnellus, c. 94 (above, note 134).

¹⁷⁶ On this usage of the word "tribunal" see Agnellus, ed. Testi-Rasponi, 69 note 6, 228 note 3.

¹⁷⁷ R. Garrucci, *Storia della arte cristiana nei primi otto secoli della Chiesa*, IV (Prato, 1881), 55–56, states that it represents "St. Apollinaris in the center with two disciples who have come to Ravenna to plant the Faith and destroy idolatry symbolized by the serpent." Ricci, *Tavole storiche*, 51, suggests that "perhaps Christ with two disciples with the serpent underfoot in reference to Psalms 73:14 or 90:13." The same is stated by G. Galassi, *Roma o Bisanzio*, I (Rome, 1930), 72–73; while Gerke, "Nuove indagini," 202–3, says "Christ with two *duces Apostolorum*" who trample the asp and the basilisk (which is not shown in the mosaic!)." P. Verdier, "Dominus potens in praelio," *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch* 42 (1982), 35–106, in a study of the iconography of Christ stepping on the asp or other beasts, suggests, on 36–38, either "Christ and two Apostles" or "three martyrs." On the iconography of Christ in this aspect see also A. Quacquarelli, "I riflessi di Ps. 90 (91), 13 nell'età patristica," *Vetera christianorum* 11 (1974), 5–30, 235–68 and 12 (1975), 5–45.

¹⁷⁸ Smith, *Architectural Symbolism*, 140; Frugoni, "I mosaici," 287.

¹⁷⁹ Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, III.3, ed. Heikel, 78; PG 20, col. 1057; trans. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 15–16 and *Bracken House*, 23. Mango notes here that the panel was not necessarily on the Chalke but "in the vicinity of the main entrance." It should be recalled that Constantine also had other portraits of himself hung over the entrances of other palaces, as stated above, note 139. Verdier, "Dominus potens," derives the iconography of the scenes of Christ trampling the asp from this panel. The same scene appears on at least one coin issued by Constantine; see J. Maurice, *Numismatique constantinienne*, II (Paris, 1911), 414, 507–8.

¹⁸⁰ See esp. Deichmann, *Geschichte*, 213–19 and *Kommentar*, I, 209–39; R. Heidenreich and H. Johannes, *Das Grabmal Theoderichs zu Ravenna* (Wiesbaden, 1971), with bibliography; M. Fagiolo, "Theodericus-Christus-Sol: Nuove ipotesi sul mausoleo," *ArchVest* 23 (1972), 83–117, with an exhaustive, annotated bibliography.

in plan with the exterior but is cruciform. The upper level is also externally decagonal, but the interior, entered through a door directly above that of the lower level, is circular in plan with a small niche directly opposite the entry. The smaller diameter of the upper level is quite noticeable in the building's elevation, causing it to appear bottom-heavy. This is because the mausoleum was probably never completed; an arcaded gallery may have been intended for the upper story in the manner suggested by G. De Angelis d'Ossat (Fig. 22).¹⁸¹ Also notable is the material used in its construction. While all other buildings in Ravenna of this period were constructed of brick, the mausoleum was built entirely of stone ashlar. The building technique reveals the use of "Syrian" masonry details, especially in the handling of the joggled voussoirs of the exterior.¹⁸²

The dominant part of the structure of the building is the massive roof, cut in a domelike shape from a single piece of Istrian stone. Around the outer edge of this dome are twelve projecting spurs with a name of one of the Apostles inscribed on each. The *Excerpta Valesiana* state that Theoderic specifically sought a large stone for the covering of his mausoleum, and this unusual feature has attracted attention ever since.¹⁸³

Several aspects of the iconography of the mausoleum are quite clear. The design certainly looks back to imperial mausolea of centuries past. The use of a two-story mausoleum type recalls the mausolea of Diocletian at Split and those of Gallienus and Maxentius in Rome, while the exterior upper-floor gallery recalls the imperial mausolea of Milan.¹⁸⁴ Another allusion to imperial prototypes may

be seen in the use of stone masonry, which is unique in Ravenna. Such a technique, at least as an exterior finish, was employed in numerous imperial mausolea, including those of Augustus, Hadrian, and Diocletian. The Mausoleum of Helena and its contemporary, the so-called Tor de' Schiavi, which may also have been an imperial mausoleum, both outside of Rome, were built of brick but were then covered with a stucco drafted to look like stone masonry.¹⁸⁵

One question that has often been discussed but never resolved is which of the two cellae was intended to hold the porphyry sarcophagus of Theoderic.¹⁸⁶ Many arguments have been put forth in favor of placing it in the upper cella—to locate it under the dome, to avoid flooding in the lower cella, to make it inaccessible—none of which is very satisfactory.¹⁸⁷ The sarcophagus would have been under the dome no matter on which level it might have been placed. If flooding had been a perennial problem here, then one imagines that another site could easily have been chosen. Certainly, the lower level was meant to serve more than the function of pedestal. If that were its original function, why was the trouble taken to create an interior space of such a distinct form? Or, better yet, why would that interior be decorated with still extant sculpted seashells, which are obvious funerary symbols?¹⁸⁸ With regard to accessibility, presum-

the imperial mausolea of Milan, the now destroyed octagon which at one time served as a chapel dedicated to S. Gregorio and the chapel now known as S. Aquilino attached to S. Lorenzo, see R. Krautheimer, *Three Christian Capitals: Topography and Politics* (Berkeley, 1983), 88–92, with references to earlier literature.

¹⁸⁵ On the Mausoleum of Helena see F. W. Deichmann and A. Tschira, "Das Mausoleum der Kaiserin Helena und die Basilika der Heiligen Marcellinus und Petrus an der Via Labicana vor Rom," *JDAI* 72 (1957), 44–110, rpr. in Deichmann, *Rom, Ravenna*, 305–74. For the Tor de' Schiavi see A. Frazer, "The Porch of the Tor de' Schiavi at Rome," *AJA* 73 (1969), 45–48.

¹⁸⁶ The sarcophagus is mentioned by Agnellus, c. 39, ed. Holder-Egger, 304; ed. Testi-Rasponi, 113 ("et ipsa urna, ubi iacuit, ex lapide pirfretico valde mirabilis"), who saw it lying outside of the mausoleum. This may or may not be the same porphyry sarcophagus now displayed in the upper cella.

¹⁸⁷ Arguments on the original location of the sarcophagus are summarized by Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 221–22. See also N. Borghero, "Il Mausoleo di Teodorico a Ravenna: Problemi e interpretazioni," *FR* 92 (1965), 5–69, esp. 40–49; A. Messina, "La cosiddetta 'scarsella' del mausoleo di Teodorico," *FR* 117 (1979), 29–38.

¹⁸⁸ M. E. Mariën, "Le symbolisme funéraire de la coquille de Cortil-Noirmont," *BMAH*, 3rd ser. 6, 5–6 (1944), 113–20, where the shell is linked to Pythagorean beliefs. Seashells are found on numerous Roman and Early Christian urns and sarcophagi. See, e.g., F. Cumont, *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains* (Paris, 1942), pls. xi, xxix; and F. W. Deich-

¹⁸¹ "Un enigma risolto: Il completamento del Mausoleo Teodoriciano," *Quaderni dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura*, 6th–8th ser., 31–41 (1961), 67–82; rpr. in *FR* 85 (1962), 5–39 and expanded in his *Studi ravennati: Problemi di architettura paleocristiana* (Ravenna, 1962), 93–111; the latter rpr. in his *Realtà dell'architettura*, 493–508. His reconstruction has been accepted by Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 492 note 24. For an overview of this and other proposed reconstructions, see Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 223–29.

¹⁸² See Krautheimer, op. cit., 273, who also notes (p. 186) the use of Syrian building techniques in the articulation of S. Apollinare Nuovo.

¹⁸³ "Se autem vivo fecit sibi monumentum ex lapide quadrato, mirae magnitudinis opus, et saxum ingens quod superponeret inquisivit"; *Excerpta Valesiana*, 96, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 568, 569. In the early 14th century Ricobaldus of Ferrara wrote: "(Theoderic) sepultus Pharos, quod est extra Ravennam uno tectum lapide, quod nunc dicitur Sancta Maria Rotunda"; *Compilatio Chronologica*, 225.

¹⁸⁴ For Split see T. Marasović, *Diocletian's Palace* (Belgrade, 1982), 106 ff. For that of Gallienus see G. M. De Rossi, *Bovillae, Forma Italiae, Regio I*, vol. 15 (Florence, 1979), 246–50. For

ably the outer fence and the doors to the structure itself would have kept out any unwanted visitors. There are better arguments for locating the sarcophagus in the lower cella. Most important is the cruciform shape which recalls several predecessors, such as the so-called Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, the cella of the Mausoleum of Hadrian, and numerous nonimperial but monumental mausolea. Also important is the connection with the imperial mausolea as seen in the architectural type. It is likely that the placement of the sarcophagus would also follow the precedent of the earlier imperial mausolea which often dictated that the lower cella be used for this function.¹⁸⁹ This view is strengthened by the parallels that have been drawn between this building and *heroa* which often had a sepulcher at the lower level.¹⁹⁰ The upper cella with its mosaic floor, the mosaic cross decorating the dome, and the small niche would probably have served as a memorial chapel.¹⁹¹

One aspect of the building which might link it to other late antique mausolea is its relationship to other nearby structures. The aforementioned church of S. Giorgio is known to have been close by, and it has been stated¹⁹² that the mausoleum was actually attached to it. Such an arrangement would recall the mausolea of S. Costanza and of Helena in Rome and the imperial mausoleum in Constantinople. The belief that the mausoleum was connected to S. Giorgio was also based on the fact that ruins of a building very near the mausoleum were seen by A. Zirardini in the late eighteenth century.¹⁹³ In fact there was a church connected with the tomb, as seen in an engraving by Coronelli done ca. 1705,¹⁹⁴ but in the absence of

further archeological evidence it is not possible to determine if this church was S. Giorgio. More interesting might be the relationship between the mausoleum and the Stadium Tabulae which was located somewhere between the tomb and the city wall.¹⁹⁵ Again the lack of archeological evidence precludes establishing the exact nature of this rapport, but the presence of a stadium near the mausoleum calls to mind the circus near the mausoleum in the Villa of Maxentius complex outside Rome.¹⁹⁶

The proportions of the building reveal an interest in special numerical ratios with the golden mean being used here as it was in the Arian Cathedral.¹⁹⁷ An interest in numerology is also exhibited in the choice of a decagonal plan. Ten was the sacred number of perfection to the Pythagoreans, and this interpretation was held by members of the Theoderican court where it was called not only a perfect number but also symbolic of heaven itself.¹⁹⁸ The probable message of the tomb, therefore, is that upon his death Theoderic reached heaven and there, perfection.

Most significant in terms of Theoderic's own political ambitions is the tomb's relationship to the mausoleum of Constantine at the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, a monument with which Theoderic would have been familiar. In its original configuration the sarcophagus of the

mann, G. Bovini, and H. Brandenburg, *Repertorium der christlich-antiken Sarcophage, I. Rom und Ostia* (Wiesbaden, 1967), nos. 34, 40, 42, 44, 45, 85, 101, 144, 188, 239, 244, 756, and 838.

¹⁸⁹ As in the Mausolea of Gallienus and Maxentius and in the supposed mausoleum of Constans I at Centelles, Spain. See T. Hauschild and H. Schlunk, "Vorbericht über die Arbeiten in Centelles," *MadrMitt* 2 (1961), 119–82.

¹⁹⁰ See Fagiolo, "Theodericus," 83; E. Dyggve, "Mausoleo di Teodorico, le origini della cupola," *CorsiRav* (1957), pt. 2, 67–73.

¹⁹¹ Dyggve, "Mausoleo," 69. Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 217, believes that the cross is an early medieval addition, but the evidence is inconclusive.

¹⁹² Testi-Rasponi, 118 note 2 and 217 note 3. See also Farioli, "Ravenna paleocristiana," 52. The evidence of their proximity is found in such documents as one of the 9th century: "In monasterio S. Georgii Martyrio quod non longe ab ipso monasterio [S. Mariae Rotundae]"; S. Bernicoli, *Documenti dell'archivio storico comunale di Ravenna anteriori al secolo XII*, FR, Suppl. 1 (Ravenna, 1913), 10.

¹⁹³ A. Zirardini, *De Antiquis sacris Ravennae Aedificiis, liber posthumus* (Ravenna, 1908–9), 115.

¹⁹⁴ Heidenreich and Johannes, *Das Grabmal*, fig. 98.

¹⁹⁵ As evidenced in a document of 1214: "In Claustro S. M. Rotunde. Jacobus Dei gratia Abbas cum consensu monachorum c.p.e. Ruziero, et Grifo fratibus unam petiam terre et Stadium iuxta eam positum constitutam in Planetolo"; Fantuzzi, *Monumenti*, II, 299, no. 26. "Planetolo" refers to the stretch of land between the city wall and the mausoleum. See also Agnellus, ed. Testi-Rasponi, 117 note.

¹⁹⁶ See Frazier, "Iconography" (above, note 109).

¹⁹⁷ De Angelis d'Ossat, *Studi ravennati*, 116. The golden mean is described by Boethius, *De geometriae*, I, PL 63, cols. 1324–25; ed. G. Friedlein, Teubner (1867), 386.

¹⁹⁸ Boethius, *De institutione arithmetica*, II.41, PL 63, col. 1146; ed. Friedlein, 139; "At vero posteri propter denarii numeri perfectionem, quod erat Pythagorae complacitum." This in turn was a translation of Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Introductio arithmeticae*, II.22, trans. M. L. D'Ooge, *Introduction to Arithmetic* (New York, 1926), 267 and note 1. On the passage of Boethius see also M. Masi, *Boethian Number Theory: A Translation of the De Institutione Arithmetica*, Studies in Classical Antiquity 6 (Amsterdam, 1983), 165 and notes. The Pythagorean tradition was not newly reintroduced at this time, for Eusebius also calls ten a perfect number; *De laudibus Constantini*, VI.14, ed. Heikel, 210; PG 20, col. 1348; trans. Drake, 93. Ten as a symbol of heaven, also a Pythagorean idea, is found in a letter from Theoderic to Boethius: "Iuvat inspicere, quemadmodum denarius more caeli et in se revolvitur et numquam deficius invenitur"; Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I.10, ed. Mommsen, 19; ed. Fridh, 20–21; see also Cumont, *Recherches*, 224. A. Bode, "Das Rätsel der Basilika di San Vitale in Ravenna," *ZKunstg* 20 (1957), 52–79, esp. 52 f, was the first to call attention to this passage in Cassiodorus. See also R. Silva, "Architettura e pensiero matematico nei secoli V e VI," *Critica d'arte* 15, no. 151 (1977), 3–8.

emperor stood in the central space, surrounded by twelve cenotaphs inscribed with the names of the Apostles.¹⁹⁹ Although this arrangement was no longer extant in the time of Theoderic, there is no reason to doubt that he knew of it. Furthermore, the linking of the imperial tombs to those of the Apostles, and therefore of the emperors to the Apostles themselves, remained even when the mausoleum became a separate structure under Constantius. This linkage of ruler and apostles is expressed at Theoderic's mausoleum in the twelve spurs of its roof, which are inscribed with the names of the Apostles. The idea probably stems from the practice of Constantine and later emperors of imitating Christ and the Apostles, even to the extent of surrounding themselves with twelve companions, a practice apparently followed by Theoderic in emulation of the Byzantine emperors.²⁰⁰ It is not surprising, therefore, that the spurs with the names of the Apostles should be found on his tomb, in order to create a link between himself and the Twelve as was done at Constantinople.²⁰¹ This thesis is supported by other considerations. First, the list of Apostles on the spurs is not the "Western" list but rather the "Byzantine" list, exactly the same as that found in the church of the Holy Apostles.²⁰² Second, that the imitation of the imperial Byzantine mausoleum-church was the intention of Theoderic and other barbarian rulers is shown also by the fact that the Merovingian king Clovis (d. 511) was buried in the church he built in Paris which was also dedicated to the Holy Apostles.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹The church is described by Eusebius, *Vita Constantini*, IV.58–60, ed. Heikel, 141–42; PG 20, cols. 1209 f. See also Krauthheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 69 f.

²⁰⁰For Theoderic see Dyggve, "Mausoleo," 70–71; Fagiolo, "Theodericus," 89; E. Uehli, *Die Mosaiken von Ravenna* (Strassburg, 1935), 60. The information is attributed to Cassiodorus, but I have been unable to locate the exact reference. For the Byzantine emperors in this context see Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee*, 128 ff; A. Kaniuth, *Die Beisetzung Konstantins des Grossen* (1941; rpr. Aalen, 1974), 34–38.

²⁰¹For the influence of the imperial mausoleum on that of Theoderic see A. M. Schneider, "Die Symbolik des Theodorichsgrabes in Ravenna," *BZ* 41 (1941), 404–5; G. Tabaroni, "La cupola del mausoleo di Teodorico," *FR* 105–6 (1973), 119–42, esp. 133 ff. For a rather fantastic and unconvincing interpretation of the spurs see S. Ferri, "Per la storia del Mausoleo di Teodorico," *Settimane* 3 (1955 [1959]), 57–64, where it is argued that the dome was made in imitation of a tent with the spurs representing the tent pegs and their number chosen arbitrarily.

²⁰²Schneider, "Die Symbolik," 405 note 5.

²⁰³K. H. Krüger, *Königsgrabkirchen der Franken, Angelsachsen und Langobarden bis zur Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts: Ein historischer Katalog*, Münsterische Mittelalter-Schriften 4 (Münster, 1971), 40–54; M. Vieillard-Troiekouroff, *Les monuments religieux de la Gaule d'après les oeuvres de Grégoire de Tours* (Paris, 1976), 206–8. Unfortunately, nothing remains of the original church which

A possible problem with this interpretation is that it is uncertain if the inscriptions are contemporary with the original building or if they were later additions. It seems that the abbreviation SCS used in the inscriptions is found in no other Ravennate monument of this period. All others, found exclusively in mosaics which may explain the difference, use SANCTUS before the name of an Apostle. However, this abbreviation was used in the earlier church of S. Prisco in Capua, so it could have been used at Ravenna in the time of Theoderic.²⁰⁴ A point often ignored in the debate over the inscriptions is that there is no satisfactory explanation for their appearance on the spurs except that which suggests that Theoderic was imitating the arrangement at Constantinople. Finally, this interpretation is most in accord with the other features of the mausoleum which have been examined here.

CONCLUSION

Several observations about Theoderic as a patron of art and architecture may be made in light of the foregoing discussion. One of the most striking aspects of his patronage is its extensive nature. A vast number of major buildings were repaired or constructed anew throughout his kingdom. This stands in marked contrast to what had taken place in Italy in the decades prior to his arrival. Though many of the emperors of the West during the fifth century did not reign long enough to have established building programs, those who did were either unable or unwilling to undertake such projects. Valentinian III (425–455) enjoyed a long reign but evidently built little. To him may be ascribed only the Palace in Laureto in Ravenna, mentioned above, and a few minor repairs and restorations of buildings in Rome.²⁰⁵ One must go back to Honorius (395–423) to find a ruler whose building program approached the scale of Theoderic's, but it, too, was mainly concerned with repairs and restorations rather than new constructions.²⁰⁶ Among the eastern rulers, the scope of Theoderic's program was perhaps matched only

was later dedicated to Sainte-Geneviève. Clovis was the brother-in-law of Theoderic.

²⁰⁴See Deichmann, *Kommentar*, I, 219–20; Heidenreich and Johannes, *Das Grabmal*, 80–82. G. Tabaroni, "Il mausoleo di Teodorico: Riflessioni e proposte," *CorsiRav* 29 (1982), 221–38, on 228, argued that the inscriptions are contemporary with the building.

²⁰⁵C. L. Labranche, *Roma Nobilis: The Public Architecture of Rome, 330–476*, diss. (Northwestern University, 1968), 104–32.

²⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 75–103.

by that of his contemporary, Anastasius, before Justinian took the throne.²⁰⁷ In short, the attention lavished on buildings by Theoderic was something that much of the empire, and Italy in particular, had not seen for a long time.

The wide scope of Theoderic's patronage did not dilute the quality of the executed works. The fine workmanship evident in the surviving buildings and mosaics reveals that the best artisans of the period were commissioned to participate in the building program. All this could not have been accomplished without a strong commitment of finances and resources on the part of Theoderic. In this he was very much an anomaly among his own people, for the Ostrogoths certainly had no building tradition of their own. It is apparent that Theoderic was looking to imperial Roman models, ironically, to those very individuals whose political legacy had been upset by Odoacer's and Theoderic's assumption of rule in the West.

The character of Theoderic's reign and artistic patronage described here has highlighted the powerful influence exerted on the king by contemporary Constantinople and by ancient Rome. The years of his youth spent at the court of the eastern capital, participating in the ceremonies and spectacles, experiencing the city and its monuments, must have molded the young barbarian's ideas on rulership. He consciously modeled his own reign and court on that of Byzantium, as his own words, addressed to Emperor Anastasius, attest: "Regnum nostrum imitatio vestra est."²⁰⁸ The model of ancient Rome was just as important, if not greater. From the moment he set up his court in Ravenna, Theoderic was extremely conscious that he was the successor of those who had ruled Rome and that he, like the Byzantine emperor, was now a "prince" who ruled "in Rome's name."²⁰⁹ This realization,

no doubt encouraged by the antiquarian interests of the men of his court, caused him to turn to the past for inspiration and to strive to "make himself equal to the ancients."²¹⁰ The link with the past was made abundantly clear in the full range of his artistic patronage, from his coinage to his major buildings.

His two most significant buildings, the palace and mausoleum at Ravenna, were definitely modeled on imperial prototypes, a fact inherent in the buildings themselves. Ambassadors moving from capital to capital could not have helped but notice the similarities of the Ravenna palace with its prototype in Constantinople. Nor could the association of Theoderic's tomb with imperial mausolea escape notice. The last imperial mausoleum of late antiquity, that of Honorius in Rome, a domed, circular structure with a two-part exterior elevation, was still functioning as such in Theoderic's day, as were probably most other late antique imperial mausolea.²¹¹ In short, Theoderic and his architects deliberately chose building types and artistic motifs that were recognizably imperial.²¹² It seems logical to conclude, therefore, that art and architecture were employed as tools of Theoderic's political propaganda as he sought to justify and define his position as ruler of Italy. It is in this realization that we can best understand the motivation behind one of the greatest building programs of late antiquity.

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²⁰⁷ For the building program of Anastasius see C. Capizzi, *L'imperatore Anastasio I (491-518)*, OCA 184 (Rome, 1969), 216-21. The corpus given therein is not, however, sufficiently critical and should be used with caution.

²⁰⁸ Cassiodorus, *Variae*, I.1, ed. Mommsen, 10; ed. Fridh, 9; trans. Hodgkin, 141-42.

²⁰⁹ "Additur etiam veneranda Romanae urbis affectio, a qua segregari nequeunt quae se nominis unitate iunxerunt"; *ibid.* See also T. S. Burns, "Theoderic the Great and the Concepts of

Power in Late Antiquity," *Acta Classica* 25 (1982), 99-118; J. Moorhead, "The West and the Roman Past: From Theoderic to Charlemagne," in *History and Historians in Late Antiquity*, ed. B. Croke and A. M. Emmett (Sydney, 1983), 155-68, esp. 155-56.

²¹⁰ Cassiodorus, *Variae*, IX.24; cf. above, note 32. See also Moorhead, "The West."

²¹¹ See M. J. Johnson, *Late Antique Imperial Mausolea*, diss. (Princeton University, 1986).

²¹² This raises the controversial subject of "architectural iconography." While it is true that some attempts to find "meaning" in late antique architecture have overshot the mark, I strongly agree with Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 466 note 24, that "buildings in antiquity, as today, did use . . . a vocabulary expressive of their function and their place in a social or religious hierarchy. To deny this means closing one's eyes to an element integral to any architecture."